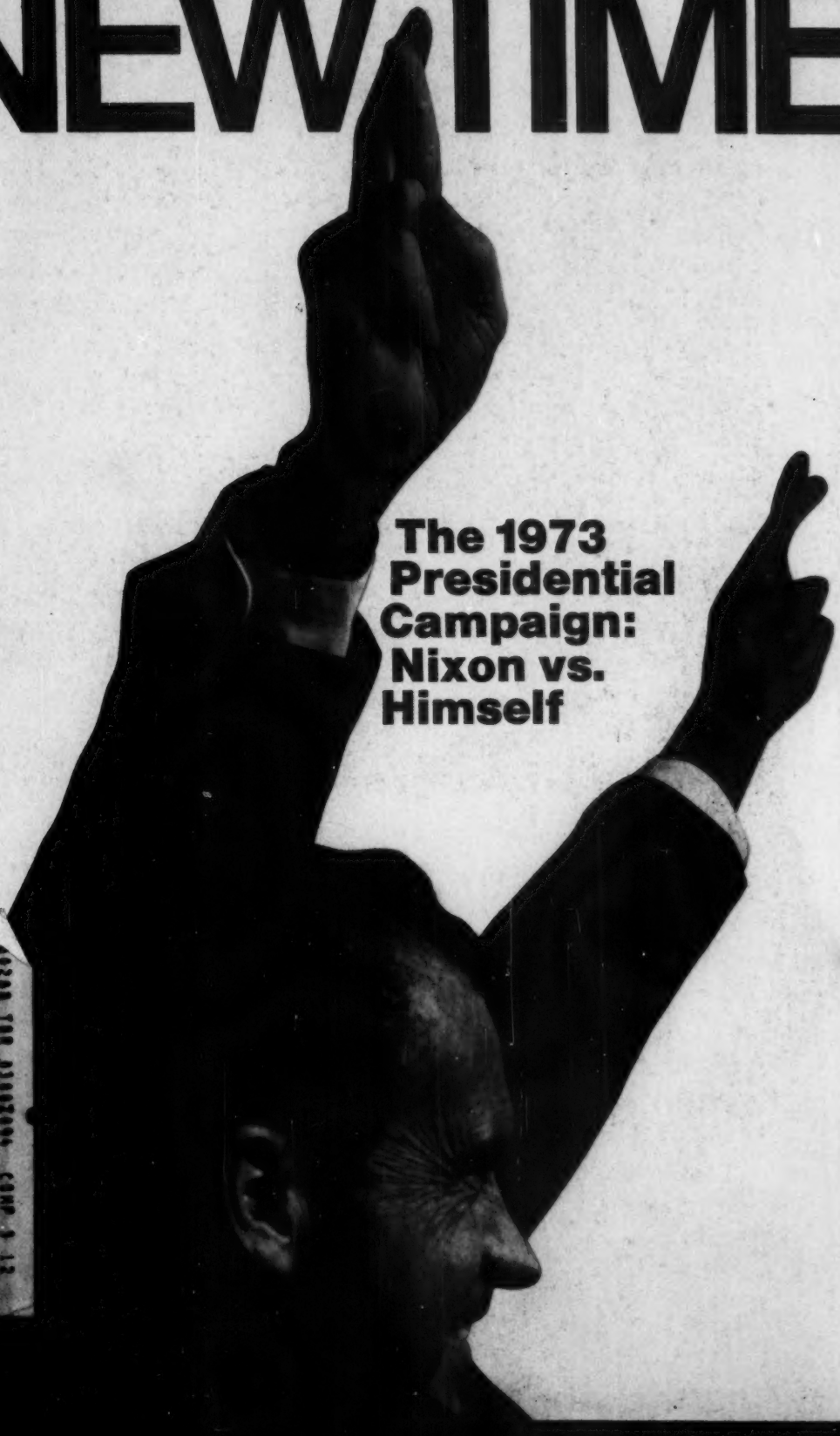
DECEMBER 14, 1973
60 CENTS

The Protestant Joey Gallo
by Jimmy Breslin

NEW TIMES



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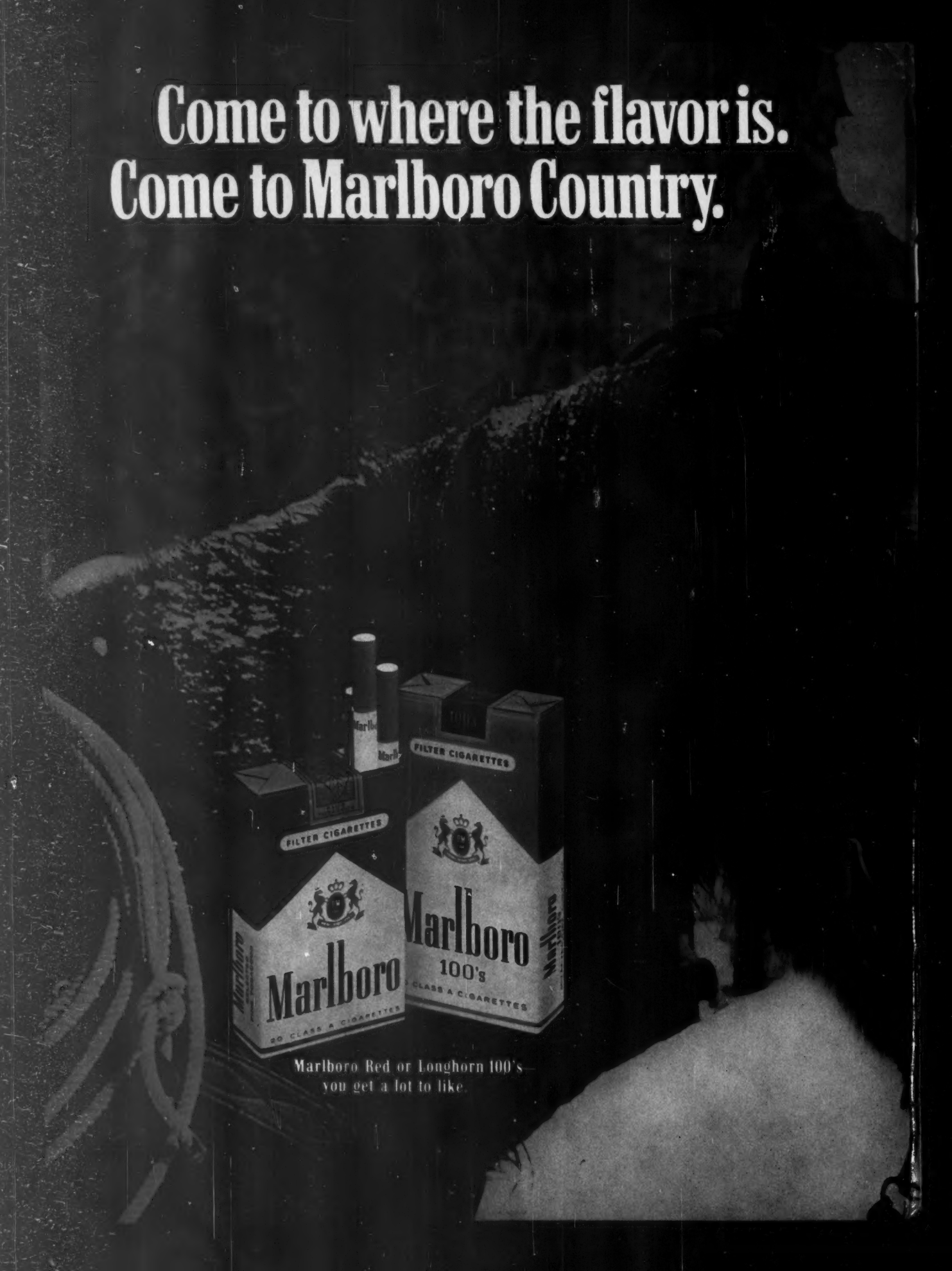

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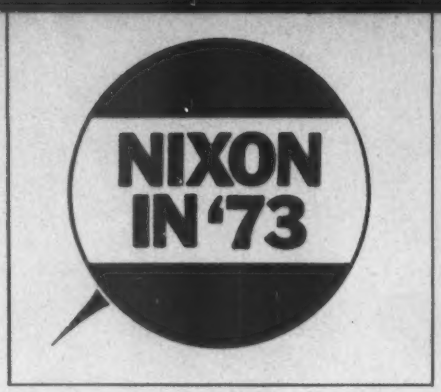

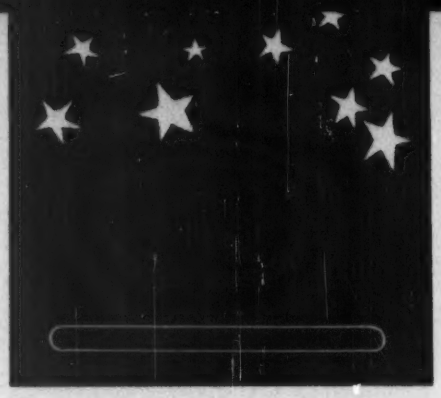

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NEW TIMES · *December 14, 1973*
Volume 1, Number 5

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Nixon *The 1973 Presidential campaign: He hates it, having to go the dusty, peopled route he avoided in '72. But to save his Presidency, he's out on the stump. "If you can talk with crowds, you'll be a Man, my son!"* **By Brock Brower** 20

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4-left Jeff Albertson, right Pryde Brown; 6-UPI; 8-UPI(2); 10-UPI; 21-Wide World; 23-Wide World; 24-Harry Benson; 33-left Martin Blumenthal, top J. Wachter, bottom Bob Peterson; 65-UPI; 68-UPI.

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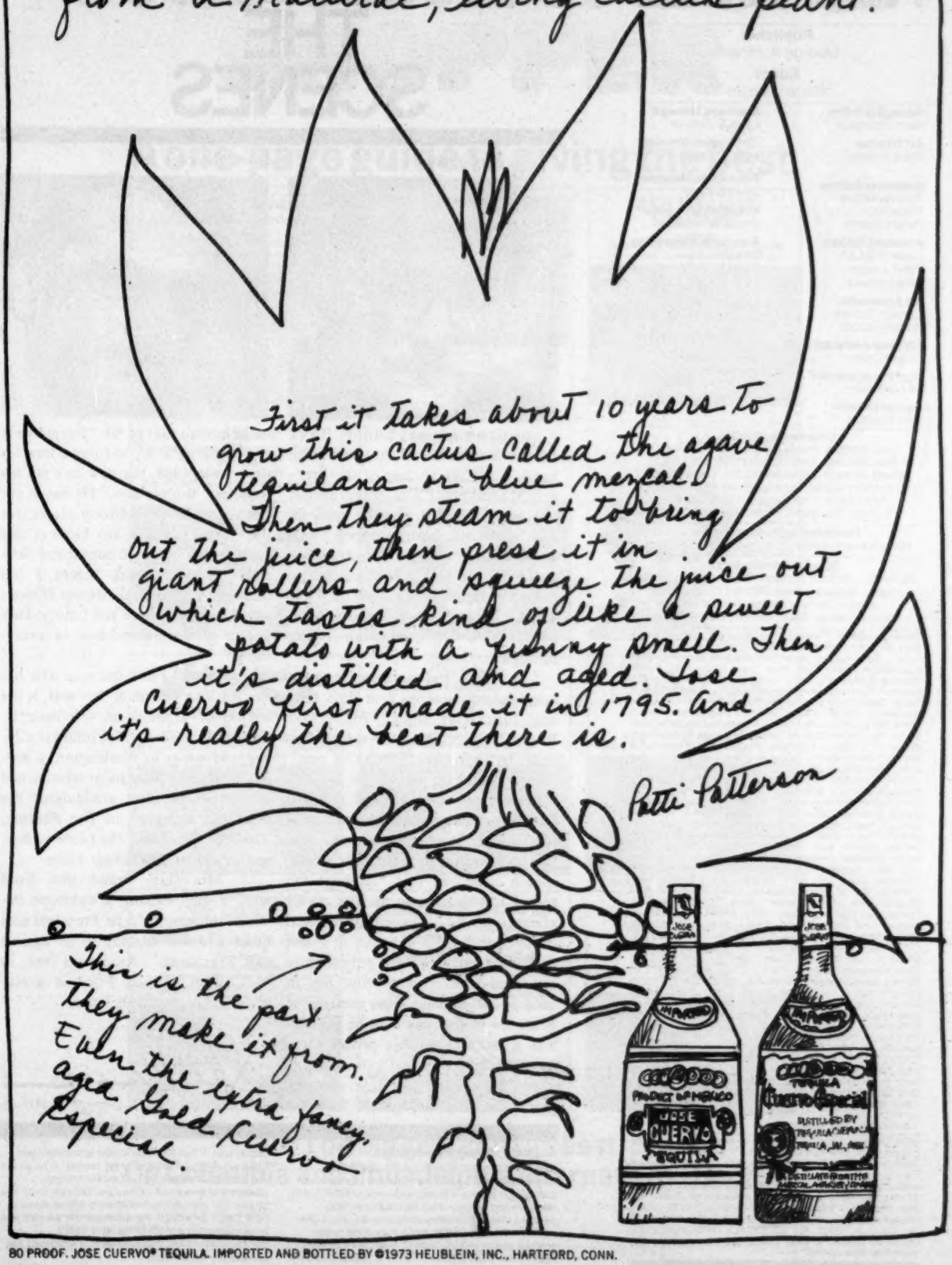
How they make a drink called tequila from a natural, living cactus plant.


First it takes about 10 years to grow this cactus called the agave tequilana or blue mezcal. Then they steam it to bring out the juice, then press it in giant rollers and squeeze the juice out which tastes kind of like a sweet potato with a funny smell. Then it's distilled and aged. Jose Cuervo first made it in 1795. And it's really the best there is.
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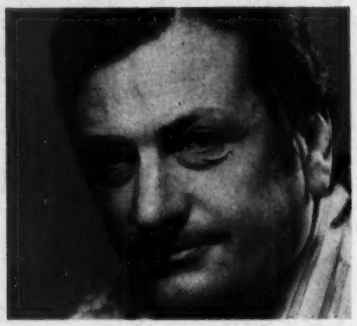
BEHIND THE SCENES

Charlie McCollum

Brock Brower



Contributing Editor Brock Brower is a seasoned Nixon campaign hand, if not exactly one of the President's admirers. ("I've voted against him every time I've had the opportunity, but it still hasn't stopped him," he says.) He covered Nixon's 1968 campaign and his '72 re-election non-campaign, and in this issue of NEW TIMES, he gives a first-hand account of Nixon's '73 campaign swing through the South.

"There was more concentrated campaigning in those four days than any four days since 1968," says Brower. "And even so, it was lackadaisical—he took one full day of rest." Brower feels that, essentially, Nixon's '73 race for survival is not all that different from the one that landed him in the White House five years ago. "There's no change in the basic single-speech tactic," he says, "although the speech has been changed—now, it's all about how he achieved peace and brought the POW's home. It's still carefully memorized and only slightly reworked from stop to stop. But in 1968 he had to make some pretense of being less withdrawn than he actually was. I saw him twice in private then, now it's impossible."

There's no question, Brower points out, that the fight of '73 is far tougher than that of '68. "People were really willing to try to forgive him for the past in 1968, but now he's got his troubles," Brower says. "He has to appear at really second-level places. He could not appear at any locus of this country that could be considered first-rate. He can't speak before a top union or a top school. Mercer University, for instance—it's not Emory. He's got to go for second-best in everything."

Gerald Ford, the man who has run for Vice President this year, is the subject of a profile in this issue by Charlie McCollum. McCollum is a 25-year-old writer in Washington, a Boston University film major who turned to journalism after graduation. His work has appeared in *The Phoenix*, *The Real Paper* and *The Globe* in Boston, as well as *The Village Voice*.

McCollum found that Ford was "a guy walking a tightrope between thinking he'd be President real quick and not wanting to go against the President." As you'll see in McCollum's piece, Ford is pretty artful at keeping his balance.

George A. Hirsch

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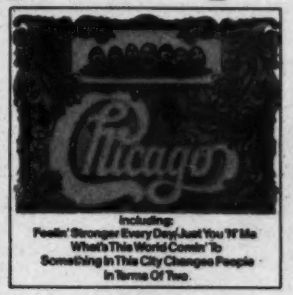
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Feelin' Stronger Every Day/Just You 'N' Me
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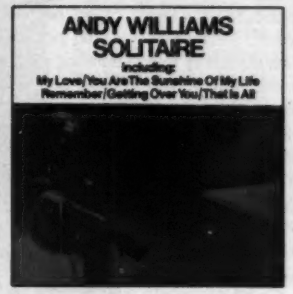

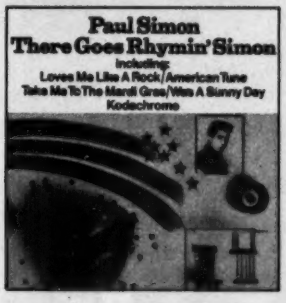

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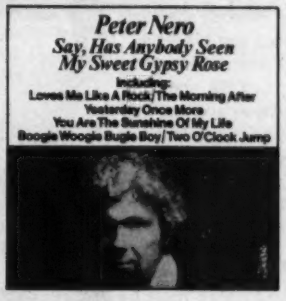
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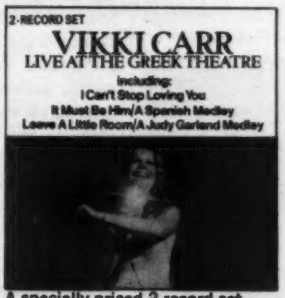
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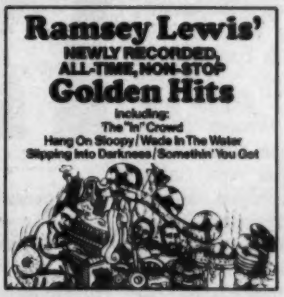

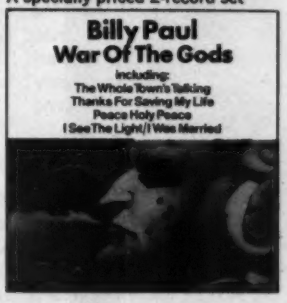

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The Insider THE WORD

Barbara Walters' ultimatum

More power to them

After President Nixon's first energy-crisis speech, Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield told his staff he wanted to reduce hallway lighting and lower temperatures to 68 degrees in the Senate Chamber. Dimming the lights was easy, but turning down the thermostat became a problem. Because the large chamber retains so much heat, the building engineers were called in. After working three days—in vain—to cut back the heat, the engineers came upon an ingenious solution. They turned on the air conditioning.

Dick in '76?

First it was Howard Cosell. Now it's Dick Cavett. Members of his staff and public relations firm are dropping hints that Cavett might run for the Senate in 1976 against New York Republican Senator James Buckley. Says Cavett: "I would consider running only when Woody Allen becomes Governor of New York State."

A reluctant candidate

Queen Barbara

Hours before NBC-TV was to go on the air via satellite with the live coverage of Princess Anne's wedding from London, Barbara Walters placed a transatlantic call to *Today Show* producer Stuart Schulberg in New York. She demanded that the NBC producer in London be fired and replaced immediately. After a brief conference, Schulberg called her back to say the man would not be fired and that she damned well better get on with the show or *she* would be replaced. She got on with the show.

Sally's story

Princess Sally

Sally Quinn, CBS's attempted antidote to Barbara Walters, is not at all happy with her new assignment. "I don't like it," she says bluntly. Privately she has been telling friends she will leave, but doesn't say when. Since she started working for CBS, she has granted no interviews and has no plans to give any. "Why should I?" Sally snapped. "It's an interesting story, worth a lot of money. When the time comes, I'll write it myself."

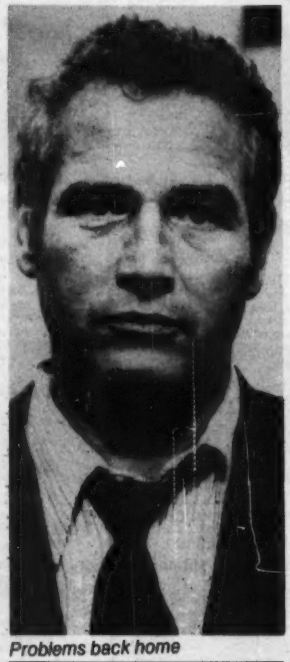
Never molest a snake in Binghamton

The courts in Binghamton, N.Y., ruled last year that *Deep Throat* and Linda Lovelace were not legally obscene. So it came as something of a surprise when Binghamton's Broome County Veterans Memorial Arena recently banned rock star Alice Cooper from doing a scheduled one-night show. The Arena's board of directors heard rumors that Cooper cuts up chickens and snakes on stage and he "practically molests" his pet boa constrictor.

Nothing of the kind, Arena manager Charles Theokas told the board. "Alice Cooper only simulates cutting up chickens and snakes." Elaborated the group's promoter, Richard Klotzman, "It's just like any other rock show, except for the boa constrictor and the guillotine."

A nice place to visit

Paul Newman has announced he will return to his home state of Connecticut to mend fences and "show a more positive side" of the industrial city of Bridgeport. A few weeks back Newman had been directing a movie on location in Bridgeport when he was asked why he thought the city was unique. His reply? "Even the mayor admits this place is the armpit of New England."



Problems back home

Cox's complaint

Former Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox, living in nearly total seclusion in the tiny coastal Maine hamlet of South Brooksville, is fighting another losing battle—this time against thieving raccoons in his vegetable garden. At a recent gathering of Maine reporters in his old farmhouse overlooking Penobscot Bay, Cox said he would have to give up growing corn next year: "It got to where the raccoons came by to see if the corn was ripe. You could see where they'd pull open the ears to take a look." Cox used to admire thorough investigators.

Farmer Cox

Dog appeal

One by one, veteran movie stars are giving in to the quick money of TV commercials. Henry Fonda has been taking snap shots and wiping up messes on kitchen floors for over a year. And now Doris Day, whose own program has gone off the air, has signed a one million dollar television deal to sell dog food.

Hi-test heist

What may be the country's first gas-shortage theft was reported last week in the Detroit suburb of Novi. Police say a 60-foot tanker truck was stolen from a Gulf Oil Corp. storage facility there, driven 28 miles and then drained of its 15,907-gallon load of fuel. Wholesale, the payload is estimated at $4,500. But on the growing black market, the theft could amount to much more. Gulf officials say they are worried that gasoline thievery, a crime that ranked just below hubcap stealing in the '50s, could become big business in the energy crisis years ahead.

I love to sing. And I love to drink Scotch. Most people would rather hear me drink Scotch.

BY GEORGE BURNS

WHEN THEY ASKED ME to write this article, they said to be sure and mention Teacher's Scotch, but not to drag it in, make it sound natural. Well, I just mentioned it, and that sounded natural. It sounded so natural I'll mention it again—Teacher's Scotch.

I'm a great writer. If I had a beard, I'd be another Hemingway.

They told me they wanted a fresh approach. Well, to write fresh you have to think fresh, and to think fresh you have to be fresh. I haven't been fresh January 20th will be 31 years. I'm not going to tell you my age, but I've reached that point in life where I catch cold if I smoke a cigar without a holder on it.

But don't worry, I'll never give up singing. In fact, I started singing the day I was born. I remember the doctor kept slapping me, but I wouldn't stop until I finished two choruses of "Wait Till The Sun Shines, Nellie". And when I started the verse to "Honeysuckle Rose", he put me in the incubator and turned off the heat. It's a good thing I was smoking a cigar or I'd have froze to death.

I never did like that doctor. He wouldn't put Teacher's Scotch in my bottle.—See how naturally I mentioned that without dragging it in. I'm a great writer even without a beard.

But I've found out that a little drink now and then helps my singing. It loosens my vocal chords. Sometimes my vocal chords get so loose that whenever I hit a low note I step on them. And when I step on them, I hit a high note. I lead a very nervous life. In the morning I get up a baritone, and when I go to bed I'm a soprano.

As you're reading this some of it may be funny, and then again some of it won't. So just read the funny stuff and skip the rest of it. But if the rest of it turns out to be the funny stuff, and the funny stuff turns out to be the rest of it, if I were you, I'd skip the funny stuff, too.

That last paragraph has so much rhythm you could almost dance to it. Well, I'll have another little sip of Teacher's Scotch, then back to the old typewriter.—How about that?—another natural mention. If I keep writing like this, I'll win the Pulitzer Prize.

Now that I've started writing, it makes me mad after all these years to discover that something I've never done is what I do best. There may be hundreds of things I've never done that I'm great at. Tomorrow I'll take a crack at painting. I'll get a brush and some paint, and lie on my back and paint my bathroom ceiling. I may even make my own paint.

And if that works out, I'll paint the Mona Lisa. But in my version she'll have a reason to smile, because I'll have her holding a glass of Teacher's Scotch in her hand.—Another natural mention—and in oil, yet.

I find that writing is just like singing. But it's kind of hard to end an article with a yodeling finish. But you've got to have an ending, so here goes; I'm going to make this ending so subtle that you won't even notice I'm being natural.

Two men were standing at a bar. One was drinking Teacher's Scotch with his left hand, and the other was drinking Teacher's Scotch with his right hand. So I said to the one who was drinking Teacher's with his left hand, "Why do you drink Teacher's with your left hand?" He said, "I always drink Teacher's with my left hand."

Then I said to the fellow who was drinking Teacher's with his right hand, "Why do you drink Teacher's with your right hand?" He said, "Because if I didn't drink Teacher's with my right hand, you'd keep mistaking me for that fellow who drinks Teacher's with his left hand."

Well, that's the article, and I'm glad I wrote it. It's opened a whole new career for me. It turns out I write as good as I sing.

86 Proof Scotch Whisky Blended and Bottled in Scotland by Wm. Teacher & Sons, Ltd. © Schieffelin & Co., N.Y., Importers

POWER POLITICS

The FBI digs deeper into Saxbe's past; Rocky runs aground in North Dakota; Mayor Daley's fifth column

The Insider : Politics

Saxbe

While Congress mulls over the constitutionality of Ohio Sen. William Saxbe's designation as Attorney General, more than two dozen FBI agents have been combing Ohio to check the shady spots in his background. A lawyer, cattle breeder, pilot and licensed real-estate broker who has invested heavily in an Ohio ski resort and is building a second home in Costa Rica, Saxbe has been seriously embarrassed by past business ties.

The most embarrassing has been Saxbe's long friendship and business association with Sam W. Klein, a Cleveland millionaire who is treasurer and the largest single shareholder of Bally Manufacturing Corp. of Chicago. The world's largest producer of slot machines and pinball games, Bally has been investigated several times for alleged connections with organized crime.

In 1970, Saxbe bought 600 shares of Bally—which he quickly sold after the purchase was publicly disclosed. He also wrote two personal-reference letters for Klein to the Nevada Gaming Commission—in 1969 and then again last April.

FBI agents are looking into Saxbe's office "flower fund"—in which his employees contributed money to defray his political expenses between campaigns—while he served as Ohio's Attorney General.

And NEW TIMES has learned that the FBI is checking into a report that in 1963 Saxbe, then Ohio's Attorney General, and former Gov. James Rhodes may have accepted from organized crime interests one million dollars between them to help lengthen the state's horse racing season.

Despite Libyan President Qaddafi's recent business trip to Paris, U.S. intelligence officials are close to certain that the French will not supply the Arabs with nuclear weapons. Arab leadership is still considered too volatile, the countries too revolution prone, and France itself could become the object of nuclear blackmail. "Membership in the nuclear club has made France more conservative," remarks one analyst. Others point out that the Russians would almost certainly be able to inspect any French nuclear devices in Arab hands. "We should be able to buy a look at them ourselves," says an unsmiling CIA executive, "if the Israelis don't steal them first."

Aides to Senator Barry Goldwater are saying Mr. Republican is seriously considering retirement when his term is up in 1974. Goldwater is relatively young for a senator (he'll be 65 in 1974) but is reported to be terribly disillusioned about Watergate. Apparently he is also tired of the Washington grind after nearly 18 years on the job, including a Presidential campaign.

In Chicago, the liberal Independents who ousted Mayor Daley's delegation at the 1972 Democratic convention have run into some hard times. Led by northside Alderman William Singer, who has already announced he intends to challenge Daley for mayor in 1975, the Independents have conceded they can't get any "name" candidates to run in 1974. "The election is being decided right now over at Daley's slate-making sessions," said a despairing liberal strategist.

And within Daley's slate-making sessions—the first he has ever held in the open—it is his own younger party regulars who are giving him the most trouble. Edward Vrdolyak, an ambitious 35-year-old city councilman from the 10th Ward, is directing a serious fight to depose long-time Daley crony P.J. "Parky" Cullerton from his seat as County Assessor. "When Daley goes," says one observer, "they are going to divvy up the city and people like Vrdolyak want to stake out their claims right now."

Oiling up his rusty Presidential campaign machine, New York Gov. Nelson Rockefeller has taken to the hustings, keynoting Republican fund-raising events across the midwest. One stumbling block is that he can't seem to sell his newly unveiled hard-line image. Rocky likes to tell the folks about his "tough" drug law in New York. But in the conservative midlands he is remembered for New York's liberal abortion law.

Before his appearances November 26 in Grand Forks and Minot, N.D., Rocky was denounced from several quarters around the state—where an abortion law modeled after New York's was voted down by a 78 percent margin in 1972. The director of radio and TV for the Bismarck Diocese of the Catholic Church, the Rev. John Owens, said, "It's an insult to expect North Dakotans of good moral conscience to pay a man of his caliber homage and respect, much less money."

And the day Rockefeller appeared in North Dakota, the state's only Representative, Mark Andrews, and Senator Milton Young, both Republicans, found other commitments to keep them from attending.

Rockefeller

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THE FUEL CRISIS

"By February we will see the gravest dislocation of American society since World War II"

The Insider: Energy

By Christmas the energy crisis will have radically altered the face of America. But no one in Washington, in the Congress, the White House, the Cabinet is saying so out loud. Those few who see a catastrophe coming are keeping quiet in fear of the political ax that falls on the bearers of evil tidings. "It's the most unbelievable feeling," says Dr. John Curtis, chief of staff of Congressman Morris Udall's House Interior Subcommittee on Environment. "Here I am walking around Washington and everyone is behaving as if nothing is happening—and in two months, all our lives will probably be changing."

By February, according to my figures and sources, the United States will be in the middle of a serious recession—factories closed down, work weeks reduced, major unemployment, the price of food rising, the stock market falling daily. Some industries such as travel, packaging, food will have changed beyond recognition. Others such as petrochemicals, fertilizers, drugs, cosmetics and film, will be heavily regulated. Housing starts will be dropping 10 percent a month, newsprint in short supply. There will be total rationing of all kinds of fuel. Probably about 10 to 15 gallons a week for your car, 50 percent to 70 percent of what you burned last year for your house except in the Southwest.

The distribution of energy will be the dominant political fact of the next three years and the next Presidential election—even more divisive than Vietnam. Congressman Mike McCormack, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Energy, and one of the few men ahead of the problem, said privately last week, "By February we will see the gravest dislocation in American society since World War II. People will very likely be without heat in New England for extended periods. Not just thermostats turned down, but without heat. And there will be blackouts of Eastern cities. Unemployment will be a serious problem. And even if the Arabs turn the oil back on tomorrow, there would be a lead time of six weeks or more before it reached American consumers."

To uncover the dimensions of the oil shortage one must crawl through the grubbiest swamp of figures since the Hamlet Evaluation Program in Vietnam. Everybody's statistics are different.

President Nixon says our supply of petroleum will fall from 10 to 17 percent short of our anticipated demands this winter. That means a shortage of about 2.5 million barrels of oil a day. But, according to figures supplied by McCormack's office, Udall's office, the CIA and the Department of Defense, the President has underestimated the U.S. daily consumption and it is more likely the shortage will amount to almost twice as much, or five million barrels a day.

But even on an estimate of a three-million-barrel shortage a day, says Dr. Curtis, "the Defense Department predicts eight or nine percent unemployment. Since unemployment increases more rapidly with each barrel of oil less, a five-million-barrel-a-day shortage means 15 to 20 percent unemployment by the beginning of March."

Most of the important remedies to the oil shortage could not begin to take effect until from two to eight years—even if we started to work on them right now with World War II-type crash programs. As for the Alaska pipeline, if work started tomorrow, it would be three years before the first drop of oil came out the other end. The same is true of improved mass transit, the production of smaller cars, new incentives for gas and oil exploration, new refineries. Even further away, five to 20 years, is the extraction of oil from tar sands, the liquefaction of coal, nuclear power plants in significant numbers and solar energy.

All that can be done for the next two years is to conserve and ration. Which makes those actions vital. In a way, the Arabs have done us a favor. They have forced what was a creeping crisis to come on us suddenly and so made it dramatically visible. America has the opportunity for a great debate and great decisions. What sort of nation do we wish to be: How fat? How lean? How independent? How dependent? How regulated? How free? How equal? How nonequal? How greedy? How generous?

In the politics of the energy crisis so far, there's little whiff of such debate—mostly demagoguery and politics as usual. Oil executives, most politicians, and environmentalists have all drunk from the same polluted American well and imbibed the dream that our resources are limitless. The same kind of thinking produced the hallucination we could win in Vietnam and still have the great society because we were so powerful. Since World War II the American energy system has been designed and built to sell an excess of crude oil. That excess no longer exists. Now we must transform the system into an instrument of social benefit in time of scarcity.—ARTHUR HADLEY

OFF THE RECORD

Hostile reaction to *Time*'s editorial; The *Post* ponders what to do about Rebozo; And a TV station bans *Batman*

The Insider : Media

Outraged letters to the editor are not the kind of sample on which George Gallup would base an opinion poll, but they are still troubling to a publisher. Three weeks after the New York *Times* called for Nixon's resignation, it had received 236 letters reacting to the editorial, 166 of which opposed the newspaper. Three days after its editorial calling for resignation, the Denver *Post* had counted 145 letters against its stand and 45 supporting it. The Detroit *News*' editorial brought in 374 letters against resignation and 57 for it.

But the most devastating reaction was the outpouring of wrath against *Time* Magazine for publishing its editorial calling for the President to step down. By mid-November *Time* had received a total of 2,674 letters about the editorial. Of these, 2,240 were against the position *Time* had taken in the first editorial in its history. One-fourth of the angry letter writers canceled their subscriptions. It was the largest reader reaction *Time* has experienced in its 50-year history, overwhelming even the hostile response to its cover story on *Last Tango in Paris*.

On October 25, The Washington *Post* ran a story by Ron Kessler suggesting that Bebe Rebozo's bank sold $91,500 in stolen IBM stock certificates in 1968 and that Rebozo knew that they were stolen. The story was based on the sworn testimony of an insurance investigator who said he had told Rebozo the stock was stolen before Rebozo sold it. Presumably, since the story was based on court records, it was libel-proof.

But Rebozo, who denied the story, filed a $10 million libel suit against the *Post*. On November 19, the *Post* was served with the formal complaint and then had 20 days to respond.

Interestingly enough, the suit puts the *Post* in an ideal position to get some exclusive information on Rebozo. Assuming Rebozo does not drop the suit, the *Post* has the right to initiate deposition proceedings in which their representatives can sit Rebozo down under oath and ask him virtually any question about his life and finances. Because of this procedure most Mafia leaders never consider libel suits against newspapers who print damaging things about them. "Rebozo is either very stupid," said one investigative reporter, "or else he really doesn't have anything to hide."

The routine legal procedure in a case like this would be for the *Post* to ask the judge simply to dismiss the case. A dismissal would save the paper time, money and the possible adverse publicity of a long libel trial. But for a newspaper which enjoys reporting exclusive stories, the possibility of getting Rebozo in a deposition proceeding is extremely intriguing.

"I approved that story before they ran it," says Joe Califano, LBJ's former advisor and now one of the *Post*'s lawyers, "and there was no libel. Right now, we don't know what we are going to do." In the interests of Woodward and Bernstein, he said, the paper should go for the depositions. "But the interest of a newspaper trying to get rid of a lawsuit is something else."

The FCC is seriously considering eliminating the so-called "clear channel" radio stations. These are the high-powered stations like WNBC and WABC in New York which can be heard literally from coast to coast on clear winter nights. Originally created to bring radio to listeners outside the effective area of most regular stations, the 14 clear channels are now considered too profitable. One FCC staffer says such a station, if it were available, would sell for at least $10 million.

If the FCC does act, listeners across the country would be deprived of Wolfman Jack, the Grand Ole Opry and all the other good guys on clear channels.

There's new hope for some of the 19 newsmen (five of them Americans) missing in the Vietnam war. Walter Cronkite, the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*'s Richard Dudman and *AP*'s Peter Arnett recently met with Henry Kissinger and told him they had determined, through interviews with former POW's, that some of the missing newsmen are alive in Cambodia.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY CLARK FRANKEL

Aquaman, Batman and Superman, three TV cartoon series which some irate parents feel are too violent for their kids, will soon be blacked out by Metromedia's KTTV in Los Angeles. The station, whose license had been challenged by four citizen groups, has just signed an agreement with the groups to ban a total of 42 cartoon strips (of which the station only airs these three) and to broadcast a "caution to parents" before airing 81 other shows that come on before 8:30 p.m. Live-action programs, such as *Outer Limits*, will now be preceded by two bongs of a soft chime with the following voice-over: "Parents—we wish to advise that because of violence or other harmful elements, certain portions of the following program will not be suitable for your children."

THE NEW TIMES GUIDE TO THE

arts

At the movies

Ash Wednesday. Director Larry Peerce (*Goodbye, Columbus; A Separate Peace*) has sunk to his natural level with this compendium of cliches about a Grosse Pointe matron who suffers through fancy on-screen (yecch) body sculpture to try to hold on to her philandering husband. Elizabeth Taylor does all that anyone could ask with her thankless role, and Henry Fonda and Keith Baxter are as sturdy as usual as her spouse and new-found ski-resort friend, respectively. The film's brightest scene, though, centers on Margaret Blye, who plays Taylor's independent 30-year-old daughter. When Blye gets into a good movie, she could be something else.

Westworld. Michael Crichton's fun and sporadically funny sci-fi picture is built arcund a super premise: suppose one could go to a $1,000-a-day resort and relive the Old West with true-to-life robots who serve as gunfighters and whores? . . . The twists and turns are not all they should be, and Crichton's visual sense is fairly primitive, but what the hell. Richard Benjamin is a tourist and Yul Brynner plays a robot who has his own ideas.

Executive Action. How could anyone make a dull film about Mark Lane's provocative JFK-assassination speculations? If you really want to know, here's your chance to find out. Director David Miller has blended a relentlessly uncompelling Dalton Trumbo screenplay with old news footage to build a conspiracy so passionless people who watch it might start believing the Warren Commission again. The late Robert Ryan, Will Geer and Burt Lancaster—good men all—walk through some interchangeable non-roles.

The Way We Were. Arthur Laurents wrote and Sydney Pollack directed this lamentable *Strawberry Statement* for the blacklist generation. As junky as the film is, it holds your attention far longer than it should for the simple reason that stars Barbra Streisand and Robert Redford are great together—the erotic apotheosis of the Jew/goy couplings that have become a stock-in-trade of American movies.

The Long Goodbye. Robert Altman's brilliant neon soul ballad for contemporary L.A., a frontier boom town gone bust. The director's inspiration for this highly original and striking vision is one of Raymond Chandler's Phillip Marlowe novels—but this film has about as much in common with the detective genre as his *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* did with the western. Believe it or not, Elliott Gould is great as the rumpled and ill-shaven private eye: a quintessential Altman hero, full of humor and a constant, if fatalistic, sense of integrity.

Taylor and Fonda in Peerce's Ash Wednesday: *a compendium of cliches.*

The Don Is Dead. This third-rate burglary of *The Godfather* is distinguished only by an unintentionally funny climax and the so-bad-it's-almost-good acting of Anthony Quinn, Robert Forster and Angel Tompkins. Directed by Richard Fleischer.

England Made Me. Peter Duffell directed this exquisite entertainment, based on an early Graham Greene novel and dealing with the adventures of a consummate British good guy of the appeasement era (Michael York) who has to choose between the love he has for his sister (Hildegard Neil) and his ingrained national values. The film is successful in meeting goals that are limited and not exactly original. Peter Finch, as a corrupt industrialist in pre-war Germany, continues to demonstrate that he is an actor of commanding intelligence. Michael Hordern and and Joss Ackland are also on hand.

Breezy. This picture, directed with extreme disinterest by Clint Eastwood from a screenplay by Jo Heims, actually asks us to ponder whether a 17-year-old "hippie" can find happiness with a jaded middle-aged real estate huckster in southern California. Good God! Star William Holden projects so much sincerity that his appearance here borders on the obscene. Among the supporting cast is a dog named Earle, playing a dog named Sir Love-A-Lot. Maybe someone should call the ASPCA.

Charley Varrick. Don Siegel (*Invasion of the Body Snatchers; Madigan*) directed this largely exhilarating action movie. While there

is still little room for uppity women and the formalities of search warrants in the director's scheme of things, this film's political slant is benign compared to the hard right-wing line of his last picture, *Dirty Harry*. Walter Matthau applies his best W.C. Fields-style irony to the title role, a bank-robbing crop duster who bills himself as "the last of the independents;" naturally he turns out to be smarter than the Mafioso and sheriff's deputies who yap at his heels. Joe Don Baker makes a grim cowboy hit man and Woodrow Parfrey is a memorable bundle of nerves as a small-town banker. But Siegel's the reason for the film's success; he can make a movie move in ways directors like Furie (*Hit!*) and Zinneman (*Day of the Jackal*) can only dream about.

Five on the Black Hand Side. A truly refreshing and spirited comedy about a mainstream middle-class black family, adapted by Charlie L. Russell from his off-Broadway play. While the script is not without contrivances and director Oscar Williams hasn't solved all the problems of adapting a play to the screen, there is more than enough wit and warmth to go around. The gifted cast includes Leonard Johnson, Glynn Turman, Virginia Capers and D'Urville Martin. As a meek, middle-aged mom who goes in for women's lib, Clarice Taylor establishes herself as a comic actress to be reckoned with.

The Paper Chase. *Love Story* revisited minus the story. The setting is Harvard Law School, but most of the film was shot in Toronto. It might as well be Philadelphia for all this movie has to do with its environment or real people. Timothy Bottoms stars, and James Bridges takes credit for the screenplay and direction.

Hurry Up, Or I'll Be 30. A post-adolescent Brooklyn schnook learns something about women and his parents in this sentimental romance co-written and directed by Joseph Jacoby. Nothing new here, but at least it's not offensive. John Lefkowitz is okay as the *Marty*-character and Linda DeCoff gets across the brittle and sometimes affecting graces of the struggling actress who inexplicably leads the hero astray.

Mean Streets. A film of decent intentions and real integrity about the ambiance and aspirations of Manhattan's Little Italy—a community that is here defined by a few bars, an old-world ethic and the Catholic Church. Robert De Niro and Harvey Keitel play two on-the-make hoods with naturalistic flair, but director Martin Scorsese has not found a way to dramatize the tedium of his characters' existence without inflicting it on the audience.

Summer Wishes, Winter Dreams. A menopausal couple attempts to come to terms with a rather conventional past, a homosexual son and their love for each other in this perfectly awful drama by Stewart Stern, who wrote *Rachel, Rachel*. Director Gilbert Cates tries desperately to come off as an American Ingmar Bergman, but this film has more in common with stale soap than with *Wild Strawberries*. Joanne Woodward and Martin Balsam struggle valiantly as the leads.

Lyle, Teddy and Angel in Red Ryder: *desperate people trapped in a cafe.*

The Pyx. An all-thumbs attempt by director Harvey Hart to rip off *Rosemary's Baby* and *Klute* in one fell swoop. It's depressing for all the wrong reasons. With Karen Black and Christopher Plummer.

At the theater

When You Comin' Back, Red Ryder? Yippee! A play packing more action than a Colt .45. Viperous, desperate people trapped in a New Mexico cafe clawing to keep alive. Steven, "Born Dead" tatooed on his arm; Angel, all hair ribbons and baby fat; Lyle, too good and too honest—characters so genuine director Kenneth Frankel surely lassoed them off some parched range. *Red Ryder* should stay in the saddle a long, long time.

Boom Boom Room. Hardly an explosive opening for Joseph Papp in his new digs at Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater. *Sticks and Bones* author David Rabe exposes the seamy life of a Philadelphia go-go dancer with all the subtlety of a shadeless light bulb. Chrissy gyrates while a homosexual neighbor, a lesbian dancer, a lusting father and addlepated mother jeer from the sidelines, and a chorus of cockatoo-fancy boom boom girls spit insults from chrome cages overhead. Madeline Kahn as the indomitable dancer earns her nightly ovation. Charles Durning and Charlotte Rae, Chrissy's grotesquely humorous parents, assist superbly. But the players, not the play, should draw audiences here.

Enclave. Mewling in the mews. A clique of neurotic city-dwellers plans to move into their "enclave" of mews houses and find safety in exclusivity. Their security is short-lived, however, when the unmarried member discloses he will share his quarters with a young man—his lover. And so the conventional confrontation between society and gays is again served up with all the flavor of Spam. We are told that in writing this play, Arthur Laurents proclaims his own homosexuality. Why, when opening closet doors is currently chic, does Mr. Laurents steal out on tiptoe?

Moonchildren. Eight college roommates, friends and lovers, coasting through those mid-'60 times when Vietnam was still our patriotic mission. At times funny, more often contrived, consistently as sweet as cotton candy, *Moonchildren* may well rot your teeth.

Veronica's Room. Not so much a "whodunnit" as a "whodunwhat." Arthur Kennedy and Eileen Heckart as aging necrophiliacs who snare victims in a somewhat clumsy web spun by Ira Levin (*Rosemary's Baby*). First-class acting and a magnificent set rescue this made-for-television thriller.

The Father. Strindberg's largely autobiographical play raises without answering the question: Chauvinist or misogynist? The sav-

age battle between husband and wife for supremacy employs all the venom and bite of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*. No victor is clear—both are equally pitiable and detestable. In this off-Broadway production by the Roundabout Theater, Robert Lansing provides one of the season's finest performances.

The Contractor. David Storey's improbable plot involves the raising and dismantling of a party tent. Barry Davis has choreographed rather than directed this off-Broadway revival by the Chelsea Theater. And together with outstanding ensemble playing, he succeeds in offering a production which should be around for some time.

In books

Rubyfruit Jungle *by Rita Mae Brown* (Daughters, Inc., 217 pp., $3). Rita Mae Brown has been causing trouble for years now. Back in the straight-laced days when Susan Brownmiller and Betty Friedan and Ti-Grace Atkinson were saying how they hated sexism but loved men, Rita Mae was going around telling anyone who would listen (and those who wouldn't) that she was a feminist who loved women—in her own words, a "little ole dyke." And now, Rita Mae is at it again: her novel, *Rubyfruit Jungle*—one of the first books to be published by Daughters, Inc., the new feminist press in Plainfield, Vermont—may well be the single most incendiary novel to have emerged from the women's movement. It is a tough, funny-enough-to-laugh-out-loud, moving account of the growing up of Molly Bolt—poor, a dyke, and adamantly self-respecting—in Pennsylvania, Florida and New York. Surprisingly, though Ms. Brown does nothing to challenge or expand the *form* of the novel, she does make lesbianism seem as inevitable and American as a Big Mac.

The Devil and John Foster Dulles *by Townsend Hoopes* (Atlantic-Little, Brown, 562 pp., $12.50). He was either (a) the Free World's courageous, dynamic, tireless fire fighter against the flames of Communist contagion or (b) an arrogant, sanctimonious bully who antagonized our friends, added fire to the resolve of our foes, and damned the Third World in between as immoral. Author Hoopes leans toward the latter view of Ike's extraordinary Secretary of State as he shows him to us going eyeball to eyeball with Khrushchev over Berlin, Chou over Quemoy and Nasser over Aswan. An astringent personality portrait and absorbing work of diplomatic analysis that leaves you wondering how we've all survived this long.

False Promises: The Shaping of American Working Class Consciousness *by Stanley Aronowitz* (McGraw-Hill, 465 pp., $10). This myth-busting study of the grinding daily realities of industrial existence and the history of the working class in America may be the most important volume on the nature of U.S. class relationships since C. Wright Mills' *The Power Elite* and *White Collar*. Separated from his traditional protections of family, church, ethnic group and city neighborhood, the late-20th-century worker is portrayed as experiencing an alienation that goes far beyond his separation from the profits of his labor.

Starring Fred Astaire *by Stanley Green and Burt Goldblatt* (Dodd, Mead, 869 pp., $22.50). If you enjoyed Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers dancing the "Carioca" atop seven pianos, you'll *love* this oversized number. The authors present their tribute to a great star with very readable text and over 800 spectacular photographs featuring Astaire with his famous partners: Rogers, Rita Hayworth, *et al.* The book has everything a devotee of Astaire needs: songs, song publishers, producers, choreographers, solid biographical detail, plus some fresh inside stuff about the making of the movies. As entertaining as a studio extravaganza.

Martha Graham as "Xochitl": the first role of her own from the first biography.

Martha Graham, A Biography *by Don McDonagh* (Praeger, 341 pp., $10.95). Not enough has been said about the influence of Frances Steloff—proprietor of New York's Gotham Book Mart—on the most forward-looking art of our time. It was Frances Steloff who, in 1926, borrowed the $1,000 (at a high rate of interest) that made it possible to rent the theater and pay the expenses of the dancers who would accompany Martha Graham in her first independent dance recital. Ms. Graham was 32; Frances Steloff was working on trust—she had never seen Graham dance. The concert, as Don McDonagh points out in his thorough, splendid, much-needed biography of Graham, "changed the course of dance in the 20th century." Working in collaboration with Louis Horst (who brought her the best of the modern composers), Graham's remarkable career would span almost 50 years of brilliant innovation, erratic finances, tempestuous love (there were rumors that Erick Hawkins, her husband and partner in dance once got so angry with her that he tried to push her into the Grand Canyon), and alcohol-sodden loneliness (by the late '60s she was up to a quart of liquor a day). Mr. McDonagh's biography—incredibly, the first to have appeared—is a just tribute to one of the greatest ladies of our century.

Marcella *by Marilyn Coffey* (Charterhouse Books, 240 pp., $6.95). Since 1946, Carson McCullers' F. Jasmine Addams (*The Member of the Wedding*) has been Grand Marshal of the female pubescent parade in American fiction. She had a terrible time in 1955 and 1964 when two male-trash fantasies (*Lolita* and *Candy*) showed up in drag, waving American flags and sucking solid gold Sugar Daddies. But F. Jasmine marches on because she remains a very real little girl, a very tender young woman. And, in this sense, Marcella Colby, the 15-year-old protagonist of Marilyn Coffey's first novel is like her. She's no Grand Marshal material (*Marcella* is a flawed, conventionally structured novel), but the kid's got real life. She's the best female masturbator in contemporary fiction; when Marcella masturbates, the book pulses. One scene, an attempt at self-mutilation in the basement of the Methodist Youth Fellowship, stands out as an extraordinary depiction of the relationship between organized religion and guilt; it's the kind of scene many women have probably gone through but few think or talk about.

Burr *by Gore Vidal* (Random House, 448 pp., $8.95). A wonderfully timely tonic for any citizen depressed by the current spectacle of low men in high places. In his new novel, the chronically disenchanted Vidal suggests it was ever thus—that under our brawling, roiling heritage, unalloyed virtue was no more prevalent among the founding fathers than it is now. Only they had more style. And none had more of it than the third Vice President of the United States. Using the quick tongue, biting intelligence and lawyerly insight of Aaron Burr as the most promising clay to render his sweeping portrait of our national infancy, Vidal puts on a fine show of his own as a wit, stylist and political savant. His Burr winds up a brave and thorny man, a ne'er-do-well who came tantalizingly close to vast power but finally held none. Pluck without luck lands you on the ragged edge of the American Dream.

A Different Woman *by Jane Howard* (Dutton, 413 pp., $7.95). Poet Muriel Rukeyser once asked what would happen if just one woman told the truth about herself—and answered: "The world would split open." In *A Different Woman*, Jane Howard tells the truth about herself. The book is the product of two years of crisscrossing the country and asking a lot of women to reveal the truth about their lives and loves, and Ms. Howard has written a perceptive, controlled and often very funny account of "the inescapable tidal wave" of feminism sweeping the nation. It should reg-

ister high on most women's private Richter scales.

Opening Up The Suburbs: An Urban Strategy for America *by Anthony Downs* (Yale University Press, 219 pp., $7.35). A non-utopian program to break the spreading plague that pens up the urban poor in escape-proof hellholes saturated with crime, drugs, vermin and hopelessness. Economist Downs asserts that it's up to the suburbs to get the cities off the hook by abandoning racial and economic segregation and planting clusters of middle- and low-income housing dispersed widely about the green spaces so that the middle class never loses numerical dominance. The language is heavy on academese, but the message is clear and pressing.

On records

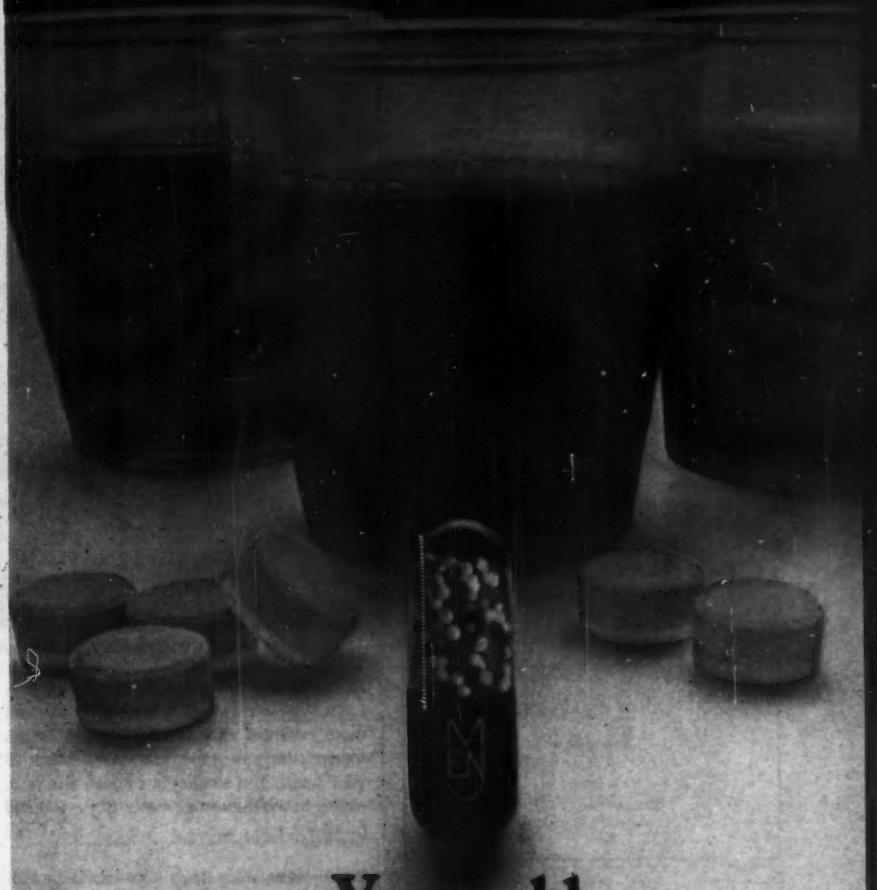
Full Sail *Loggins and Messina* (Columbia). Final album, strong and high-spirited, showing off all three of their relatively up-beat moods—laid-back-in-the-South-Seas ("Lahaina"), sexy-affectionate ("A Love Song"), and jitterbug ("My Music"). Vocals are wonderfully fresh, production is clean, harmony is unflaggingly perfect, and a well-scrubbed style doesn't diminish their potency one bit.

Bette Midler (Atlantic). A stage show in bad need of visuals—without them, Midler's flaws (well-camouflaged by the production on her vastly superior first album) loom painfully large. She sings flat, sloshes over lyrics, shows no respect for her material and relies much too heavily on the hysterical finale. Maddeningly diverse selections range from "Lullaby of Broadway" to Bob Dylan, whose "I Shall be Released" is at its absolute worst here, thanks to Bette's torchy histrionics.

Ladies Invited *J. Geils Band* (Atlantic). They've written better material this time, and that's just the change they needed. Lyrics to "Chimes" and "The Lady Makes Demands" are actually half-serious, and Peter Wolf's new singing style reveals a frankness previously foreign to his approach. Album still maintains characteristic raunch but it also ends on a cryptic, thoughtful note; the added depth helps tremendously.

Sweet Revenge *John Prine* (Atlantic). Sardonic lyrics, vinegar voice, wry delivery are this time aided by tighter melodies and tougher production, and this former mailman's third album is his best. Vocals still sound like a good-natured version of early Dylan, but his best material (title cut, "Onomatopoeia," "Dear Abby" and "Often is a Word I Seldom Use") taps a vein all his own.

Under The Influence Of . . . *Love Unlimited* (20th Century). Arranged and produced by Barry White, Love Unlimited's first album two years after their gold hit "Walking In The Rain" is soul personified and almost hypnotic. "Love's Theme," the first cut on the



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Miles Davis: mean and moody and suavely lyrical.

album, is already high on the charts but "Oh, Love, We Finally Made It" probably has even more potential as a single because it's an exceptional love song that really grabs at your heart. The singing is smooth and rich, similar to the Supremes in the '60s multiplied by 10.

Basic Miles *Miles Davis* (Columbia). Including some out-of-print and unreleased cuts, this album lays down a string of "immortal diamonds" from the great Davis bands of the late '50s—the Miles of our Youth, mean and moody and suavely lyrical. These sides also helped launch John Coltrane's rise. On them you'll hear the reason people wept when Trane abandoned, for wider adventures, the timeless style that was the peak of his early period. And while Miles is almost *always* perfect, this vintage Miles may sound better than his later bands.

Requiem *Giuseppe Verdi; Caballe, Cossotto, Vickers, Raimondi Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus, Sir John Barbirolli, Conductor* (Angel). Don't expect your speakers to blow on the Dies Irae: one is moved rather than jolted by Barbirolli's soft, reverent approach. He creates a frankincensed atmosphere in which the listener becomes aware that this is a liturgical piece, not an opera with black vestments. The soloists are simply superb, making this the best all-around vocal recording of the work to come from this generation.

Ringo *Ringo Starr* (Capitol). Fabulous big-band production, with sidemen like John, Paul, George, the Band, Marc Bolan, Harry Nilsson, Martha Reeves, Billy Preston and Ringo himself, who both plays the drums and tap dances. Great material, great nouveau-*Sgt. Pepper* cover, great everything, and so what if he still can't sing? As unassuming as it is elaborate, and great fun.

Moondog Matinee *The Band* (Capitol). A collection of arty oldies, not bad on its own but disappointing in context; this is hardly what they needed after two years without new material. A flashback to their days as The Hawks, and as such it's a disappointing non-event. Includes "The Great Pretender," plus an updated "Third Man Theme."

For Everyman *Jackson Browne* (Asylum). Brilliant second album from the finest young songwriter around. Painstakingly assembled and long overdue, but more than worth the wait. Title cut is an introspective masterpiece, "Ready Or Not" a wonderfully ironic rocker, "These Times You've Come" a love song of heartbreaking poignancy. Includes definitive versions of some of his earlier songs and a superb update of "Take It Easy," the Eagles' hit which Browne co-wrote. One of a kind, and not to be missed.

Takin' My Time *Bonnie Raitt* (Warner Bros.). Not up to her last one, but that voice carries her through anything. The problem is with material; the album shifts moods a bit too dizzyingly, from calypso to blues to Randy Newman, plus old Motown and old rock. Beautifully performed, though, especially Newman's "Guilty."

Spectrum *Billy Cobham* (Atlantic). After years of watching thump-a-day rock drummers draw standing ovations for next to nothing, we're happy to see a fine jazz drummer like Billy Cobham sock it to the rock circuit—sparking bands like Dreams and the Mahavishnu Orchestra, and spoiling naive taste-buds for good. This album, his first as a leader, shows clearly how Cobham does it: with complex timing and controlled strength as opposed to boom-boom and a few tricks. The context is hard electric music rather than rock *or* jazz, and in that category (with Tony Williams out of it lately), Billy's the best. ●

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NEW TIMES

To save his Presidency, he's out on the stump. "If you can talk with the crowds," said Kipling, "you'll be a Man, my son!"

Nixon

By Brock Brower

Right up through mid-November—until Richard Nixon began campaigning almost insurgently, like some old Bull Mooser, to keep himself a sitting President—I would have said the man and his deeds were all but passing into psychohistory. It was open season everywhere on his Presidential character. The question I got asked most often was, sure, the House can impeach, and maybe the Senate will even convict, but what's really important for the country—right now, today, with the man under all these stresses—is how close is he to cracking up? I suspect the many editorials and resolutions calling grandly for his resignation had behind them half a fervid hope that Richard Nixon could surely be made to see he "needed a rest."

But there was also shaping up, all along, another opinion. On my way down to Disney World to join the Presidential survival party, I am driven to the airport by a man who is what this Administration would call a black capitalist. That is, despite his race, he owns both the cab and the limo, and plays a good game of Sunday golf besides. He says he thinks the President is going to come through this thing okay. In fact, he, like a lot of people in this country with a little something to call their own, voted for Richard Nixon in 1972. He doesn't like all this "dirty money" being contributed by the big corporations, but as for the President's troubles now over Watergate: "The way I see it, politics is like golf. It's all *offense*. You got to get *out* there. What I like is he's not quitting. He's standing up to things. He's being a man."

Being a man, so he can stay the Man. The idea crops up again on my flight down to Orlando, Fla. In conversation with a man named Don from Edison, N.J., who is going to visit his brother and spend a few months quietly fishing before he goes, very probably, blind. An industrial accident. He has eyeshades down over his glasses to eclipse the pain that any sunlight has become for him. At 50, Don is trying to learn to live with things and feels he knows what it's like for a man to pass through an unending ordeal.

"So why doesn't some reporter, just one of you guys, stand up and say to him, 'Mr. President, whether you're right or you're wrong, I want to say this to you, that I admire you for being a man.'?" For Don, it's maybe gone a little beyond his being just a man. "Not since Jesus H. Christ walked on this earth has anybody done more for peace than Richard Nixon. And he's being crucified. Every time I see him on television, I look at his hands—" Don holds both his own before his weakened, reddened eyes, palms upward. "—and I just want to ask you, how does it feel when they drive them in?"

According to Don, I am not to look for any breakdown, I am to look for the stigmata. Dare I say that all this touches very closely upon Richard Nixon's present strategy for continuance in office?

That night, after Richard Nixon's televised press conference, I rise from the great Disney World hall—the ceiling coffered with what look like gigantic, upside-down, aluminum-foil ashtrays, gleaming clean, but still, we have been dumped on . . .—and walk out with John Osborne, the Nixon watcher for *The New Republic*. I want to try out on him my latest theory on how to be fair to Richard Nixon.

I am applying, I say, a single, even-handed standard. I subject everything the man says about Watergate to the same detached, dispassionate scrutiny that he claims he himself once applied to the testimony of Alger Hiss. And by this method I come upon the same legalistic evasiveness that he formerly accused Hiss of practicing. Nixon is always, even at this late date, at one large remove from any immediate knowledge of the least wrongdoing. Even the tapes have not yet fully crossed his ken. "I think I know—" Doesn't he *know* if he knows? "—what is on these tapes" Nixon has said, "from having listened to some, before March 21st—" But which ones before March 21st? How many did he push-button back and forth, then tell Rose Mary Woods he didn't see how she'd be able to make anything out of them? Or he'd have told us, or the judge, or at least his lawyers, instead of their suddenly having, so late, to tell him. "—and also from having seen from my secretary's notes the highlights of others. . . ." How can he still be depending upon "the highlights" from such summary notes, when the verbatim record is there to save or damn his Presidency?

"Yes," nods Osborne, "and I suppose what we're all waiting for him to do is mention the prothonotary warbler."

Exactly. Long ago, it was that one small, dropped detail about birdwatching along the Potomac that suddenly placed

MPEACH
IXON
IMPEACH
PRESIDE
HARAS
AND INTIMI
AGAINST

NIXON

Hiss in seemingly so much closer association with Whittaker Chambers. Might not Richard Nixon one day let fall some like remark that would similarly, inadvertently put him into nearer company with his own jailed White House plumbers?

But we both know better, after tonight. There is still no disclosure in the man, only continued calculation. Lately he seems more desiccated by the effort. The once slightly marcelled hair has greyed into straight Brillo. And his eyes will not settle on anybody in the room, we are told by those who have just come from the room. Yet the public control, at whatever cost to self-ease, survives. Over the worst of Freudian slips about Haldeman and Ehrlichman being "guilty" until proven "not guilty." Over even his very near brushes with betrayal of his brother Donald, accusation against his old friend John Mitchell.

What's more, he has submerged the whining and bickering at the press that turned his last stand-to at the White House into such Marat/Sade. Congressmen have also been coming in all week to practice-quiz him, so that he now presses his every answer manfully upon us. His gestures are bold, his tongue swift, and at the threat of being cut off—without his milk—he issues sharp orders for the camera to stay on him, proves himself that much more the man than anyone pushing buttons at the networks.

You can see the politics of it a crooked mile off. He will never go on trial. He will simply go on campaign. This is the start of a four-day mini-swing through three states, the kick-off jamboree for his self-rehabilitation. See The Man Grow In Office. It is Melvin Laird's original advice—that the President carry his case openly to the people—utterly perverted. For if a man steps manfully forward, puts himself before his public almost by way of taking his punishment, what desire is there any longer to call forth the truth to do him in? I can see only one hope. If the truth will not out, perhaps all this machismo will peak too soon.

Such tactics also fit, according to my copy of the battle orders, right into the Southern Strategy, so that the next day, Sunday, we go deep into Georgia. The Good Ole Boy aboard the Spirit of '76. He emerges at Warner Robins Air Force Base to be greeted by a large and well-disposed crowd, whose only bad itch is to hang Dan Rather from a sour apple tree. "They should turn CBS off in the state of Georgia!" a pig-jowled woman shouts at the correspondent.

There were the White House reporters clustered around the long tables —and slapping each other

Richard Nixon automatically praises them all for being out here when they might be watching the Atlanta Falcons play. But the crowd noise is out of synch on that, and he quickly catches himself, and says, "But they play tomorrow night, right?" For a Nixon dissector, it is fascinating to study what slight adjustments he makes when telling this same incident to another audience at Mercer University, Macon, Ga., several hours later. ". . . so when I was at the airport, I asked one of the people there—and there was quite a big crowd—how come they were out; why weren't they watching the football game? *And they said, 'They are going to play tomorrow night.'*" (Italics added) Makes a better story, with a much clearer point to it, and what difference really—any more than over the phone last June 20th, or in his EOB office on April 15th—who said what?

Outside the Mercer chapel there is a passel of demonstrators, with a few signs—"Atherton Women's Commune Has Had Enough Dick"—but inside, all is homage. The President is here to honor Georgia Democrat Carl Vinson upon his 90th birthday. The President is pleased to announce that a third nuclear carrier will be named after "Uncle Carl," and upon handing Uncle Carl a ship model of his future namesake carrier, says how glad he is that Uncle Carl didn't die before the Navy got around to doing this for him. Old Mortality, whose sticky presence might be handled more discreetly, if the President didn't himself seem to want it around. . . .

That is part of being a man, of course, admitting to your own terminus. ". . . I don't need a back-up plane. If this one goes down, it goes down and then they don't have to impeach." And there are, during this trip, intermittent ponderings of the unknowable future, of a time "when I won't be here, and Pat won't be here, and many of you won't be here." He says these things with a calm in his voice that bespeaks the classic passage of a man through, and beyond, the blackest despair. And if he were any other man, under any other circumstances, I might be having thoughts about purgation and cleansing, about his having arrived at a steadfastness of purpose—if only of self-purpose—that might carry him, and even the country, forward again.

But he is making such a public show of himself as mortal, much the same way he once, approaching 1968, made such a show of himself as shipwrecked and returned. In a crisis atmosphere, what is to be done with a man who is so often absorbed in the mere atmospherics? And how can a President pretend to have come through great personal trial, to have attained to a sort of Lincolnesque strength, on motives only a little higher, to begin with, than Warren Gamaliel Harding's?

Back in Miami again that night, I cross paths with another reporter, who pulls out of his pocket a handwritten insert he has

At McCoy Air Force Base, baby Marjorie Franklin sits in Nixon's arms, between the President and smiling Master Sgt. Edward Kleizo, the man who got slapped.

finally phoned into his paper after struggling with his ethics over its newsworthiness. His uphill scrawl reads thusly:

> Approaching a portly, balding man standing beside his son at a fence, Mr. Nixon asked the man whether he was the boy's "mother or his grandmother?" Mystified by the question, the man finally answered that he was neither.
>
> "Of course you're not," said the President, and then he soundly slapped the man's face and walked on, according to two newsmen who witnessed the incident. "The President slapped my daddy," the boy was telling people later.

The reporter has hung back, waiting for other reporters to leave the press room, until the story is now almost solely his own scoop. Secondhand. The two newsmen who actually witnessed the incident have chosen, funnily, to tell him but not to include any account in their pool report, having decided the encounter was too "insignificant." It may well have been. That is why, as has happened in every Nixon campaign to date, it becomes, next day, ridiculously key, the very tin heart of some low matter.

It would have been a day spent, otherwise, in vacuo. A day of idleness and frustration, such as seem almost scheduled into a Nixon campaign to torment the press. "Johnson would never have left us without *something* to file," a New York *Daily News* regular mutters. But today Nixon is off with Bebe Rebozo, and that, says press secretary Gerald Warren very early on, is that. Ordinarily the reporters would then begin getting together to play some sets of doubles, or just go off to swim lonely laps in their hotel pools. But today they are still clustered around the long tables, intent, at constrained intervals, upon slapping each other.

The reason is that the velocity of that Presidential slap—and by extension, the Presidential intent behind the delivery of same—have become the subject of an intense inquiry. This happens whenever an editor reads something in somebody else's newspaper that his own man didn't report.

According to a supplemental communique from the pool reporters, issued hastily just prior to midnight last, it traveled at the speed "a man might use in slapping shaving lotion on his own face." But, adds one member of that same pool, slightly breaking ranks, "it definitely moved his cheek."

This gives some indication of the ambiguity rampant, if not yet the heights to which triviality, once assisted, can soar. Over the next hour, besides getting myself slapped informatively a few times, I collect the following descriptive efforts, both written and oral, that circulate around the news room. The slap was in reality more of "a tap," or "a pat," or even "a touch," and certainly "no round-house blow." It landed "lightly," "sharply," "firmly," was given "briskly," "affectionately," seemed "more of a feminine gesture." But still, "You could hear it land."

All that is certain is that the original reporter is receiving little or no backing for his own use of the adverb "soundly." "I made one mistake," he confesses, discussing how he first picked up the thread of this story from the two pool reporters. "I had them *show* me." They each did separately. One slapped him much harder than the other, but both landed smacks that fell within his understanding of "soundly." "I should have had them *tell* me."

That, however, would hardly have been enough to save him from looming White House wrath. The man who re-

ceived the slap, an Army master sergeant, has already stated officially that he considers himself highly honored, and there is likely, after all, to be word today out of Key Biscayne. When it comes, it is a cry for "decency and courtesy" that keeps the story going one more day in the nation's news media.

Why dwell on the enlargement of such trivia? Because, once inflated, they yield a certain swollen truth. Here is how most Nixonologists would read this "slapping incident" at present, which—outside its paranoic reflection inside Ron Zeigler's denial shop—can now be said never, as such, to have occurred.

First, however courteously and decently the details are explained away, the President was flustered by his misidentification, and extricated himself from the situation with an unusual—for him—physical gesture.

Second, this does not fit with his being the manly man, always in control of himself and the situation.

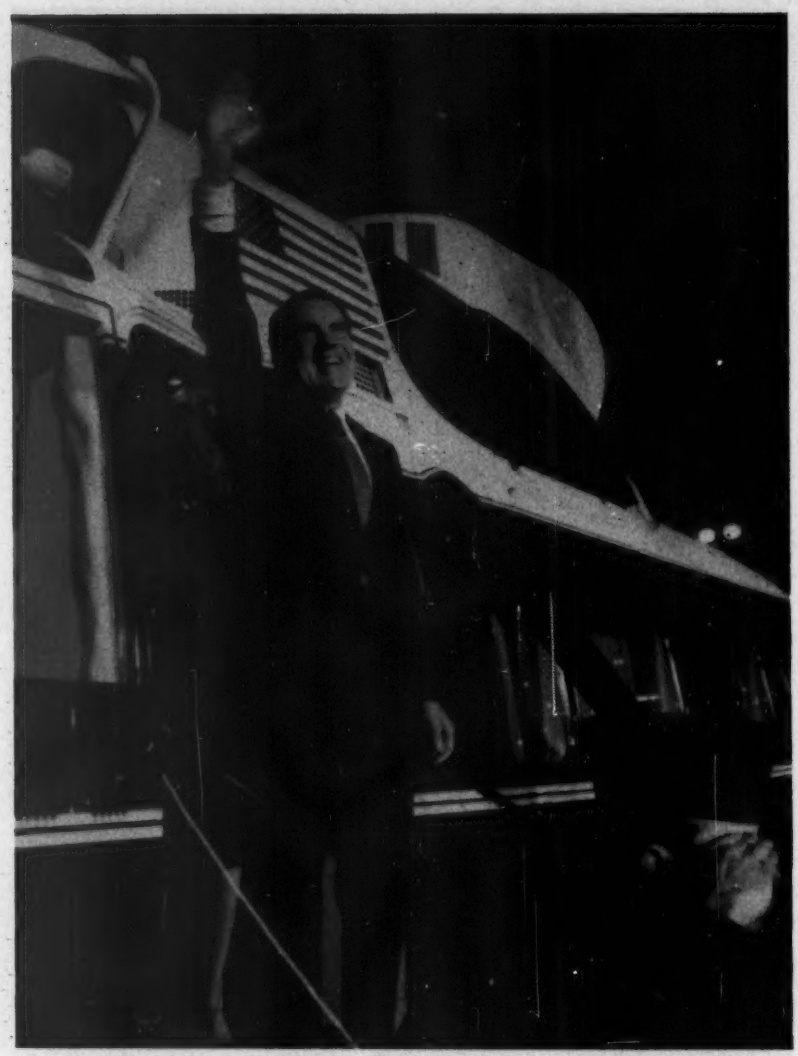
Third, it raises uncomfortable images from the President's favorite movie, *Patton*. Recall that it was a slapping incident that very nearly caused Patton's downfall, at a moment of some mental strain in the general's own career.

Fourth, it would then appear imperative for the White House to deny vigorously any such false or exaggerated report of the encounter, to attack any reporting that lets speculation loose.

So that, fifth, even though the incident is not true, what the reaction on behalf of this man to its false or exaggerated report indicates—a deep wariness that any such thing ever be believed—is quite true. And important.

That is why reporters following Richard Nixon at present often feel that there is more truth in his reactions to them than there is in anything he ever specifically tells them. If he is the man these days, he had better be more of a one with them.

So the originating reporter continues to take a special pride in his story. "I'm right about him. I just went in there and told Gerry Warren, just so you'll know, if I had it to do over, I'd do it the same."



In happier times, the non-campaign of '72, the Nixons greet a friendly crowd.

On Tuesday, traveling with the man to Memphis for a meeting with the gathered Republican governors, we run into a new sign along the motorcade route. It simply says "CROOK." His very own word.

Minutes later, in front of Holiday Rivermont Hotel, where all those Holiday Inns began—stations almost of the cross along any politician's painful rise, and for Richard Nixon to have to re-enter one now, this far along in his Presidency, only shows what trouble he's in—he picks out a sign more to his liking.

"I see this last sign: 'I believe in Nixon and America,'" he says. "Let me tell you, I believe in you, every one of you."

He has actually turned back to say this to them, not anxious for the political chew ahead, and there is a hint of the tremulous in his jowly voice. A year ago he was so close to having brought a lot of folks to identifying those two—Nixon and America—as almost one in the same. He had every intention, as he told the friendly Washington *Star-News*, of retreating often to Camp David and elsewhere aloof during his second term. That crack John Kennedy made about the majesty of the office back in 1962, that at least it was better than being Richard Nixon and having to kick through the dust, trying to beat Pat Brown of California. A decade later, having twice achieved the office, can it be that all there is to say is that the rain today in Tennessee, slow and drizzling, is only laying a different dust?

Inside, he spends more than an hour with the Republican governors, telling them at one point, "I'm sorry if I've added to your burdens." When they come out of that meeting, it quickly becomes clear that he has not further burdened them, for instance, with any knowledge. As four of them try to recollect together

what was said—"And let me say," the Governor of Tennessee interjects, "he was absolutely in control of himself, physically and mentally"—it is learned that the President will be releasing the tapes, soon, in some form, will account for his own personal finances, in some form, soon, will not walk away from office, ever, will be devoting 18 hours a day to his job, since, as he told them, "I don't play bridge, I don't play poker, I don't play golf." Moreover, he assured them, with regard to any further developments in the Watergate matter, there are "no other bombs waiting in the wings." "Or if there are," one governor recalls his words more exactly, "he isn't aware of them."

The very next day, once he is safely off this mini-campaign, and unexposed, it is further learned what his lawyer all but mumbled to Judge Sirica—that 18 minutes are missing from the June 20th tape.

I can only recall what another reporter said to me as the governors spoke intimately of their private chat with the President.

"He doesn't tell them anything more than he tells us."

He hates it. So obviously hates it. That is the emotion he dangerously let show at his initial press conference in late October, has learned once again to hide. And what he hates is having to go back, having to go the dusty, peopled, slamming route he avoided all during the 1972 election, having to engage in yet another arduous struggle for his political survival. And perhaps worse, having to admit to himself that his only chance now of survival *is* political.

He had himself ready for history, and now he must, ironically, seek to avoid the judgment that history already lowers upon him.

The mistake is ever to think he is not wholly determined—and psychologically prepared—to do just that.

While traveling with him this time—kicking along in the same dust—I got into conversation one afternoon with a member of his staff about the decimation of personnel. "You don't have enough people any more," I said to her, "to be an Administration." She sadly agreed. Ron Ziegler shouldn't have to be doing all the things he is doing. Al Haig hadn't yet been able to set up any organizational structure because he had to be dealing almost every minute with control over what was happening that very minute. But it would work itself out eventually, she was convinced, and what made all the difference right now, in the day-to-day life at the White House, was the President. His inward pull, his attraction. "It's" she finally said, "like gravity."

We have seen him behave this way before. He is no more of a "nut" than he ever was—though no less

I realized suddenly that she was describing what the rest of us have been calling his withdrawal. Only to her there was no shrinking back and away here, but rather a concentrated gathering of personal forces. She might be right. We have seen Richard Nixon behave this way before. In fact, all of his isolated political life.

The lesson is—and one to be learned from the dogged, uninspired, but shrewd thrust of his November mini-swing—that Richard Nixon is better prepared to fight for his Presidency than those of us who would remove him. He has, after all, been caught in the same lonely, harried, unsympathetic bind all his days, and to point now to the manic quirks in him is almost to play to his old strengths. He is no more of a "nut" than he ever was—though no less—and to attack him on these grounds only makes him look more of the man in his own defense.

No therapeutic argument ever forced a man from high office, however well it may write down his misrule later. National sanity, to paraphrase the Vice Presidential nominee, is whatever a majority of the American people say it is at any given moment in history. And I see little to encourage the view that Richard Nixon has done any larger horror—Watergate being only of a criminal size—that lies outside what most Americans, tragically, consider politically normal.

Once home from this "Presidential trip," I began to recollect an earlier visit to Washington this fall, when impeachment first started being headily broached. I'd paid a visit then to Congressman Donald Riegle, the former Republican from Flint, Mich., who had switched parties and lately begun the good fight for Presidential removal. We had a long and incendiary discussion about the need to impeach, the likelihood of the President's resigning instead, the service Riegle felt he could perform in a "consciousness-raising way," in preparing the country for the departure of an unstable Chief Executive.

Then Riegle asked me if I'd like to come along and hear him talk to a visiting high school class just down the hall.

I went, and was delighted to see him launch immediately into the same excited vein of argument with them, suggesting the President might be "out of there" before their basketball season started.

But I was astonished, as hard as Riegle made his case, to see them respond with stolid, gum-chewing boredom.

Then I guess I know better now how it all probably sounded to them. Like we are a government of laws and not of men, operate on a system of checks and balances, adhere to a written Constitution. Like the same things I had laid on me too, that you know you're never going to see come up again, for real, once you pass this dull high school civics. . . . ●

Some think he's stupid, but he isn't. Jerry's shrewd and neat

Ford

By Charlie McCollum

Shortly after the Senate Rules Committee approved Gerald Ford's nomination for Vice President, I ran into a Nixon aide in a Capitol Hill bar. After a couple of drinks I asked him what the White House thought of Ford's testimony before Rules and the House Judiciary Committee. The aide rolled his eyes toward the ceiling and held his nose. "Some people up there thought he was awful," he said. "I got the feeling that he realizes there is an excellent chance of his being President within the next year. I don't think he's really doing it consciously, but it looked like he was playing to a national constituency."

The conventional wisdom about Jerry Ford is that he is a dull, hard-working, conservative man. He has been portrayed as little more than a glorified ward heeler who listens dutifully for his master's call. He has been characterized as a stupid man by, among others, Lyndon Johnson, who authored the constantly repeated comment: "Too bad Jerry played football with his helmet off so often." That he rose to the position of House Minority Leader is viewed as a fluke, more a reflection of time, place and Ford's own inoffensive manner than any political ambition, skill or acumen.

Ford *is* a limited man. He is not gifted with great intellect. He has no visions, no large dreams for America. From a liberal point of view, his voting record on every major issue of the past decade has been atrocious. He has been very much a negative force, trying to stand fast against the progressive currents within the nation.

Yet, Jerry Ford is not a stupid man. He is shrewd, politically sharp. He has a precise grasp of where his limitations lie and just exactly where he wants to go. His aim is generally accurate. There is ambition in the soul of Jerry Ford. It is just ambition of a degree that moves him ahead one small step at a time, never straining the resources at his command. And the most potent of those resources is his totally ingratiating manner—stemming to a good degree from his genuine fondness for people—toward his fellow Congressmen, his home-district voters and the press . . . the constituencies that serve him. Even now, as a member of an Administration that grants little access to the press, Ford continues to court newsmen. "Jerry," says his press secretary, Paul Miltich, "*likes* to talk to reporters."

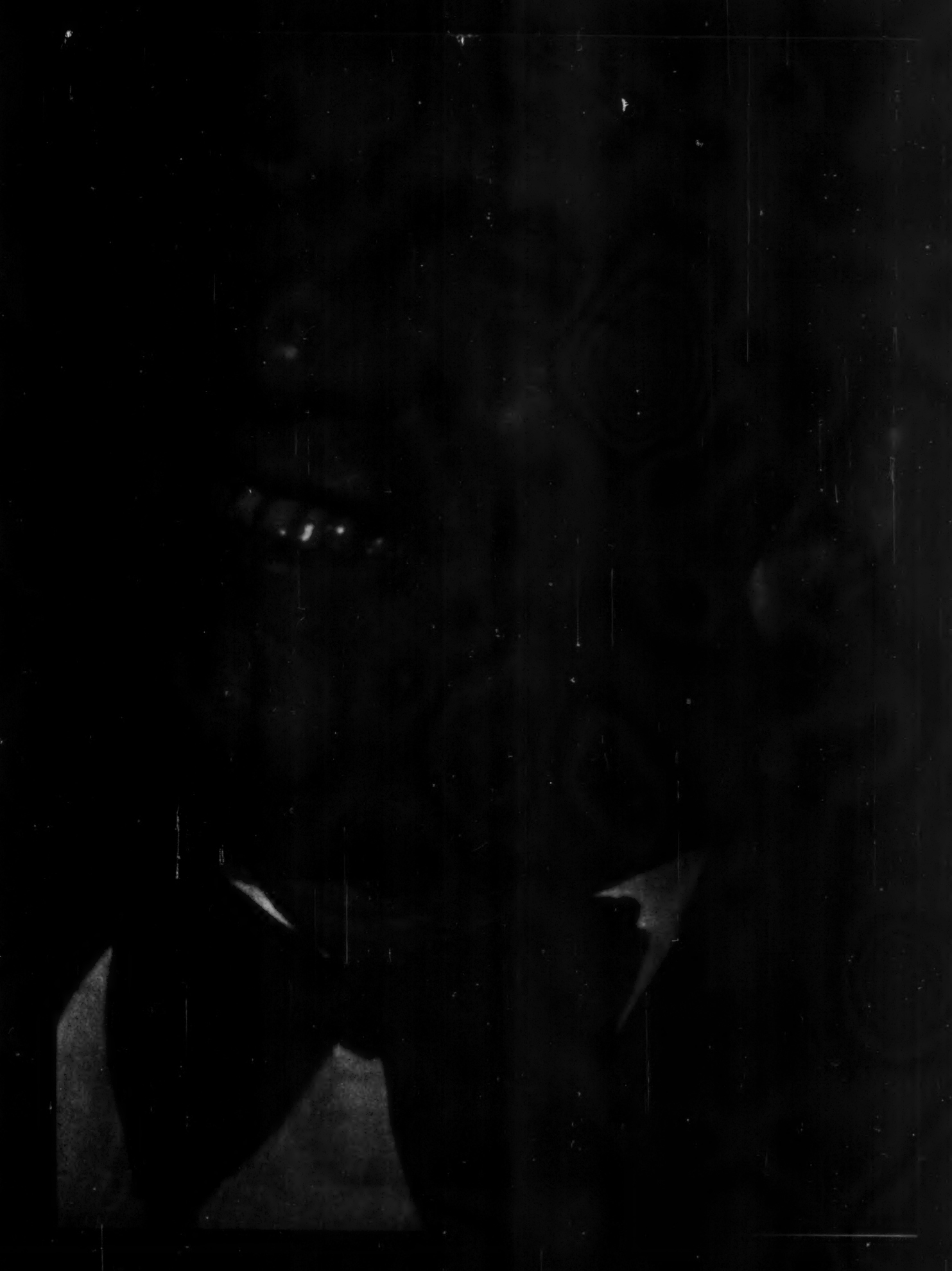
Stuck off in a corner of the House side of the Capitol, Ford's office—except for three Secret Service men—does not reflect the man's pending move up the political ladder. When I arrived there several days ago, the suite was so neat that it was frightening. Everything was in its place. A teletype clattered away in the Press Secretary's space, but each strip of wire-service copy had been cut—not torn—from the machine. The strips were precisely the same length and placed carefully on a clip-board.

Jerry Ford moved quickly forward for a strong handshake and a locking of eyes. He is still a rugged man, tough facial features with a mole on his cheek that leaps out at you in close up. His serious look was cracked only briefly by a small smile.

On the walls were pictures of Ford's family—his wife and four children—and pieces of his past. An aerial photo of Grand Rapids, the generally conservative Michigan town which comprises most of Ford's district, dominated one wall. The Congressman is a hometown boy who made good. His father, Gerald Sr., battled for years to gain control of the local Republican party, finally succeeding a year before his son first went to Washington in 1948. Someone once said that Ford was as solid and dull as the furniture Grand Rapids produces; certainly he has followed the tradition of the city's politicians: good military record, unnotable grades in law school, short and undistinguished law career, small fame as a local high school football player and as MVP on one of the worst teams in the history of the University of Michigan. All the performance solid, none of it rising much above mediocre.

Below the photos, on a table, were plaques from this group and that, an arrangement dominated by a red and white football with "THE FUTURE" printed on

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HARRY BENSON



At home last week, Ford checks the newspaper over his breakfast coffee, gets an early start on the feminist vote by washing his own dishes, then leaves for the office, passing the Secret- Service van that is now parked permanently in his driveway.

it. The ball represented the post-1966 euphoria of House Republicans. The party had just made an amazing comeback from the Goldwater disaster, moving to within 30 votes of controlling the lower chamber. Just 30 seats and Ford could have achieved his life-long ambition of being Speaker of the House—the first Republican since old Joe Martin left the job in 1954. It never came to be for Ford.

"Ever since he became a party leader in 1965 and proved to himself that he could influence votes," says one liberal member of the party, "Jerry has been moving towards being Speaker. People say he isn't ambitious,but he is. He just tempers it with a knowledge of where his opportunities lie."

In Ford's office now, he talked about how it felt to be leaving the House. "You can't live in an institution like I have for over 20 years without missing the friendships you build up: the people, the problems, the whole routine of the place. You see, I've built up my whole life on that—personal friendships. I think people always want to accomplish things and friendships help get things done. Whatever I have been able to accomplish in Congress has been a result of the friendships I have here."

Ford plays to his constituencies in building up those friendships. Detroit reporter J.F. Ter Horst recalls that, when he moved to Washington, the first person to call him was Jerry Ford. Ter Horst also says that the Minority Leader upset an entrenched incumbent in 1948 by dragging himself out and talking to every voter he could. One day, Ter Horst says, Ford called the reporter at 5 a.m. Ter Horst had agreed to accompany the young candidate on a swing through the farm country near Grand Rapids, a tour aimed at hitting farmers who rise early. The reporter had assumed the whole thing was canceled because it was pouring rain. "They milk cows on rainy days, don't they?" Ford said.

Throughout his career, Ford has generally acted out the role of a perfect Congressman, keeping in touch with his constituents in Grand Rapids; tending to business, as it is called on Capitol Hill. There was some sagging between 1966 and 1970 when Ford spent much of his time campaigning for others. An aide had to fire off a confidential memo warning that Grand Rapids Republicans were mildly displeased with all of Ford's travel and felt he wasn't giving his most to the district. The Minority Leader charged back into his home district and racked up his usual 60 percent of the vote.

For his first dozen years in the House, Ford operated in that way: tending to business and working as an "inside" man, a hard-working, anonymous member who specialized in a single area. "He did favors for everyone he could," says a Congressman who came to the Hill about the same time Ford did. "And he was incredibly easy to get along with. Even after he hooked up with the younger members of the party who were seeking to take over the party's Congressional structure, he was always good with the older members. Everybody just plain liked the guy."

The conventional belief in Washington is that members of the party's Congressional "Young Turks" used Ford's personal charm as their key weapon in the fight for control of the House structure. When Ford was a surprise choice to replace Iowa's Charles Hoeven as chairman of the House Republican Conference in 1961, Bob Griffin (now Senator from Michigan) and Charles Goodell, the former New York Senator, were credited with the small coup. Four years later, when Ford unseated Charlie Halleck of Indiana as Minority Leader, it was again

Griffin and Goodell (as well as Wisconsin's Melvin Laird) who received credit for the machinations that thrust Ford into the top spot.

"I think that underrates both Ford's brains and his ambitions," contends a midwestern Republican Congressman. "Sure, Griffin and Goodell lined up votes but Ford actually got them to *cast* those votes."

There was an outward change in Ford after he became Minority Leader. His suits became more carefully tailored. The white shirts were replaced by ones of television blue. And Ford went public: making speeches, hosting a television show with Senator Everett Dirkson, doing fund-raisers, looking to get his position and the party's position into every news story on Congressional activities. The flood of news releases, position papers and speeches that poured out of Ford's office became so pronounced that on more than one occasion, a reporter would call up the Minority Leader's office, inform the press secretary that it was raining outside and ask, "Why no comment from Jerry?"

Still, Ford never became a real whip; who could lash his party into line as Democratic leaders such as Lyndon Johnson and Sam Rayburn had done. With a group as widely split as the Republicans in the post-1964 period, it would have been a bad political tactic.

Pete McCloskey is one Republican House liberal who says that Ford never pressured him for a vote. Don Riegle, the young Michigan Congressman who switched from Republican to Democrat, recalls that, in 1970 when the White House went after Republican dissidents on Vietnam, he asked Ford to come to a fund-raiser in Flint, Michigan. The Minority Leader said he would make it. "Given my disagreements with the White House, Jerry could have declined," Riegle points out. "The fact that he said he would without hemming or hawing about it says a lot about him."

Ford's strongest critic these days has been lobbyist Robert Winter-Berger who, during Congressional hearings on the Vice Presidential designate, testified that he loaned Ford approximately $15,000 over three years to curry influential favors. While Ford denies the unsubstantiated charges Winter-Berger made in his testimony before both Senate Rules and House Judiciary, he is silent on the accusation made by lobbyist Winter-Berger in his book, *Washington Pay-Off*. According to the author, Ford did favors for Winter-Berger clients in return for contributions made to Republican candidates. The lobbyist never claims in the book that any money went into the Minority Leader's own pocket.

Sticking to the political tradition of his hometown, Ford has compiled an impressive record of solid mediocrity

Ford's 1972 campaign returns show literally dozens of contributions to threatened Republican incumbents and Republican challengers. "Look," says one Congressman who received a badly needed $1,000 from Ford, "Jerry never mentions that money. But he doesn't have to. The whole name of this game is to get re-elected. You want that kind of dough next time around, so when Jerry asks for your vote you give it to him."

A liberal lobbyist says, "You just never see Ford putting the arm on anyone. He'll just come up to a Rep., pass the time of day and make his pitch. Take the override on the war powers bill. A lot of Republicans bolted on that. Ford did his damnedest to uphold the veto, yet I saw him pat a Republican on the arm after the man told him he had to vote to override. Ford told him, 'Okay, I understand. You do what you think you have to do. And come by for coffee soon, will ya?' Now next time ole Jerry asks for a vote, the guy's going to remember that and give it to him."

Even Ford's most blatant political blunders seem shrewd when you look beneath the surface. The attempted impeachment of Justice William O. Douglas has been viewed as both Ford's stupidest and sleeziest moment as a politician. To call it stupid is to take it out of context. In 1971, when Ford announced his motion, Clement Haynsworth and G. Harrold Carswell had already been rejected by the Senate. The move was not designed to actually impeach Douglas but to warn the upper chamber that the House could hand it a messy impeachment. If Ford had really wanted to get Douglas, he would have made an impeachment motion to begin with (he actually asked for an investigation) and probably could have come up with enough votes to force the motion out of Judiciary. "Ford made his point and dropped it," says a long-time Hill aide. "There was never much of a move to knock any other Nixon court appointees and I think Ford deserves some credit in terms of effective strategy for that."

The Douglas strategy was typical of Ford's reign as Minority Leader. He has not been a builder of bridges in that post, but a builder of walls. The effectiveness and political acumen Ford has thrown into his House work have resulted in a series of victories that stopped something from happening. Even when Ford has attempted a constructive effort, the votes just were not there to implement it. By the time Richard Nixon had taken office, the Republican representation in the House had decreased to the point where the best Ford could hope for was a stalemate on the most liberal issues.

If the numbers limited Gerald Ford as Minority Leader, they also seemed destined to keep him in that role. The political dynamics of this country are

Leaving his new private plane, Ford is greeted by the battery of TV and radio newsmen who have become part of his life.

such that the Republicans seem thrust into a permanent role as minority party. "Jerry was blocked off," says a close friend of his. "He really wanted to be Speaker of the House but realized it wasn't about to happen in his political career."

Ford actively sought the Vice Presidency once before, in 1960, when he went so far as to have "Ford for Vice President" buttons made up. He less actively sought the job in 1964, realizing—perhaps—that the Goldwater ticket was doomed to defeat. The bids, Republican Congressmen point out, occurred before Ford became Minority Leader. "I think that points up his kind of ambition," contends one. "He did not throw himself at the Presidential candidates like Volpe did in 1968 but just quietly made himself available. When the option opened as Minority Leader and possible Speaker, he quietly shifted gears and moved that way."

It is a measure of Ford's subtle but ever-present ambition that he has been very careful in his testimony before the committees that must pass on his nomination. At several key points he has staked out positions in opposition to the prevailing Nixonian line. "It's kind of a narrow road to follow," Ford says. "I'm sort of torn between my inclinations and my personal desire to support the President on the one hand, yet on the other hand not wanting to antagonize or irritate the situation between myself and some of the people in Congress on the other side of the political fence."

Vice President Ford would stand closer to the Presidency than any other Vice President in recent memory. I asked Ford if this prospect frightened him. He reached behind him for a pipe and played with it for a while. "It doesn't worry me," he finally replied. "I'm not fearful if this eventuality should take place. I am as prepared for this job as anyone." After another pause, he added, "Besides, I assume it's not going to happen."

Ford is trying to follow a narrow road between Nixon and the opposition; he doesn't want to antagonize either

This is an assumption not shared by a growing number of Ford's colleagues on Capitol Hill and in the Republican party. The revelation that Presidential secretary Rose Mary Woods had erased 18 minutes of a key tape hit Republicans in Washington hard. Said a conservative Republican Congressman last week: "The bastard [Nixon] lied to us. We asked him whether there would be any more bombshells and he said no. I'm just not interested in protecting his ass any more. All I want to do is get Jerry in and save my own butt."

I asked Ford if he meant it when he said he would not be a candidate for President in 1976. "I can't say it any more emphatically," he replied. "I really mean it. I'll be 63 then. Although I'm in real good health, I'll have had 28 years of active political life and I think there's a new generation coming along."

"Jesus Christ," a Republican party official said to me recently, "you don't really believe that Jerry's totally rejected the idea of running for President, do you? It isn't like Jerry to be coy, it isn't that. He just plays the options and he probably thinks it's too early to see what the options are."

And, finally, there is the memory of a speech Gerald Ford made to the Washington Gridiron Club in 1968: ". . . Let me assure the distinguished Vice President of the United States . . . that I have absolutely no designs on his job. I'm serious. I love the House of Representatives, despite the long, irregular hours.

"Sometimes, though, when it's late and I'm tired and hungry—on that long drive home to Alexandria as I go past 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, I do seem to hear a little voice saying, 'If you lived here, you'd be home now.' " ●

President Jerry Ford?

By Larry L. King

"President" Jerry Ford? . . .

Sorry, but it fails to parse. One can't imagine clout inherent in Presidential proclamations issued over that name. Bureaucrats likely would sneer and toss them in olive-drab circular File 13s; probably the Russians wouldn't answer his diplomatic notes or Congress honor his wars.

Jerry *Ford*? Wasn't he a utility infielder with the Chicago Cubs, or was it the old Washington Senators? One of those marginals hanging on by his glove, right? Hoping to stick in the big leagues long enough to earn pension credits. Yeah, I remember Jerry: couldn't hit his hat size.

Batted .224, lifetime. Didn't have a nickname. Never said anything memorable. Sure, I remember Jerry. I think.

When Mel Laird was House Minority Whip (and, ostensibly, subordinate to Minority Leader Jerry Ford), he gave the impression of being the duo's man of substance. A story—probably apocryphal—circulated on Capitol Hill that Laird, seeking votes for a Republican bill, was asked if his understanding of that bill coincided with Jerry Ford's. Laird is alleged to have responded, "I haven't had time to explain it to him."

It is doubtful, times nine, whether Mel Laird would have said it even in jest. The point is, the story enjoyed wide Capitol Hill circulation; few insiders hearing it failed to laugh in appreciation of its presumed tidy truth.

Seven or eight years ago, gathering material for a magazine article, I shared parts of several days with Jerry Ford, including a private airplane flight to and from Gettysburg, Pa. for a GOP fundraiser. My prior impressions, formed during a decade as a Capitol Hill staffer, were largely corroborated; I would later write that Ford might well be "the human equivalent of bread pudding; outwardly dry, though slightly spongy as one plumbs the depths."

He was even then House Minority Leader, remember, the No. 1 *honcho* of the Grand Old Party in one-half of a bicameral legislative system. But when asked to describe his job, Jerry Ford dwelled not on that role but on his lesser one as the plain-vanilla Congressman representing Grand Rapids and less. Perhaps this tells us something of the man's concept of himself and, also, of his limitations: he thought of himself not as a leader of one of the two great American political parties, or as a high Congressional muckety-muck, but as another dime-store politician who often flew home to address the Rotary Club. Rather than recall himself as a man privy to White House conferences, grand strategies, or important events, he reported on techniques employed back home in Michigan to assure his many re-elections; when pressed on ideological questions, he offered copies of old speeches or recommended clippings from his office scrapbook: there was no interest, at all, in debate or philosophy or even free discussion. And when nudged toward thoughts of his Minority Leader's role, he spoke only of his typical workday schedule, of the operating nuts-and-bolts, of "good Republican team players," of what swell fellows lived on his side of the aisle in the House of Representatives. Not a word of the possibilities of the office, or its purposes, or its roots.

Which is what really worries one, at bottom, in considering "President" Ford. We know too well those bitter fruits produced in the White House by men of narrow visions to soon wish another. Granted, Mr. Ford likely would not bring as White House baggage such angry contempt for old enemies or lusts for vengeance as to blind him to bedrock Constitutional niceties. It would be comforting, however, to feel that "President" Ford harbored some special appreciation of the White House potential for harm; that if he had not excessively read history, then at least he had sat in the dark and read himself; that he sometimes analyzed, philosophized, or otherwise cogitated mysteries.

The truth is, Jerry Ford has proved little more than a personally likeable partisan hack. Whatever his President (or his party) feels "in a given moment" is what he urges the House of Representatives to feel; while that has been his job, one thinking of him in Presidential terms wishes he had not so routinely followed his superior's leads in damning amnesty, independence of the press, Vietnam war critics, and other Nixonian bugaboos. He has been the quintessential "yes man" for two Republican Presidents—Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon—who, the more events are revealed, appear to have shared such little in common that one wonders how any thinking, conscientious man could have so loyally served them both.

One remembers, too, that as Watergate crashed down, Jerry Ford held his critical peace while Senators Goldwater, Saxbe, Percy and other ranking Republicans expressed their shock and outrage at belligerent or pious White House attitudes—and, occasionally, at the conduct of the President himself. Probably Jerry Ford didn't find it necessary to bite his tongue: he has long been accustomed to holding it or giving it free rein according to the moment's political requirement.

One frets that Jerry Ford has too long been shielded by parochialism and trappings against the real world's garbage and pain. Ole Jerry's been riding his ass around in a chauffeured limousine for years, hob-nobbing with those who've got it made and largely voting in ways to make them cheer. His Michigan district is largely white, success-oriented, calm-to-dull, and perhaps smug: he is its product to the bone. The American Dream lives in an older reincarnation in Ford Country, inspiring quick harsh judgments against those refusing to pull themselves up by their bootstraps or who deviate from the traditional. The problems of Detroit seem as distant, and may be no better understood, than those of Bangla Desh. Party loyalties aside, it is very possible that Jerry Ford, in his heart, is much closer an ideological first cousin to Richard Nixon.

The petty malice seems not to be there, nor the need to punish or extract reprisals. In that, "President" Ford would appear to be a giant-step toward improvement. He may be about half mindless, but one instinctively doubts his capacity for intentional evil. Should he ascend, however—even though we wish him well—let us not fail to regard him with a proper suspicion vital to the Republic's health. Another Richard Nixon, posing behind Jerry Ford's good ole boy grin, could make it too wet to plow. ●

Contributing Editor King is at work on a biography of Lyndon B. Johnson.

THE VIKINGS

The guts, the heart and the brains of the first NFL team to clinch a title

By Dick Schaap

A few weeks ago, Chuck Foreman, the Minnesota Vikings' brilliant rookie running back, suffered an injury, which meant that for the first time in 1973, Bill Brown, 35 years old, was going to start at fullback for the Vikings. Foreman stopped at Brown's locker before the game to wish the veteran well. "Don't worry about me, rookie," snapped Brown. "I haven't lost one step of speed since the day I started here."

Foremen stared at Brown in disbelief. "You mean," the rookie said, "you were *that slow* when you started?"

Bill Brown is the target of more abuse than anyone else on the Minnesota Vikings. He is also the target of more affection. Bill Brown is crew-cut, hard-nosed and absolutely in love with the idea of hitting people and being hit. At an age when most running backs are consulting orthopedic specialists, Brown insists upon playing on the Minnesota special teams—the kickoff and punting units—because they afford him the best opportunities to hit and be hit. He plays in the wedge on the kickoff unit; arsenic is considered a less reliable means of suicide.

Brown is not what you would call an elusive runner—no fancy cutbacks for him. Instead, in the Jimmy Taylor tradition, he goes out of his way looking for people to run over. His teammates suspect that he would rather run over opponents for 10 yards than run around them for 20; the second course, the pursuit of daylight, he considers slightly unmanly. Brown's type was not uncommon when he entered the National Football League 12 years ago, but now it is exceedingly rare. He is a stereotype who has turned into an original.

Bill Brown's best years came during the middle '60s. From 1964 through 1968, he averaged more than 750 yards a season rushing. From 1969 through 1972, he averaged fewer than 300 yards a season rushing. Going into the 1973 season, Brown was no more than a Minnesota fringe back, someone to fill in Foreman, Oscar Reed, Ed Marinaro and Dave Osborn, all ranging in age from five to 12 years younger than he.

Nobody in his right mind expected Bill Brown to make much of a contribution to the Vikings in 1973. Nobody in any state of mind expected him to be in the starting backfield against the Detroit Lions in the middle of the season. The day of the game, Brown prowled the locker room, barking encouragement to the offensive linemen who would be blocking for him. "I'll buy each of you guys a fifth of whiskey," Brown said, "if I gain 100 yards rushing today."

Jim Marshall, the veteran defensive end who is even older than Brown, overheard Brown's offer. "The only way you gonna gain 100 yards, Bill Brown," said Marshall, "is if you carry the ball 100 times."

Everyone laughed. It certainly did seem ludicrous for a man who had been averaging under 25 yards a game for four years to even think about gaining 100 yards in a game.

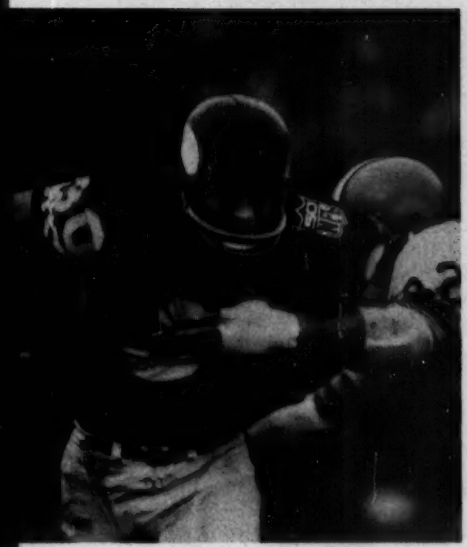
Then Bill Brown went out and gained 101 yards in 19 carries, his most productive game in five years, and, as much as anyone else led the Minnesota Vikings to a 28-7 victory—a victory which clinched the Central Division title in the National Football Conference fully six weeks before the playoffs were scheduled to begin. The Vikings, at that point, were the only unbeaten team in the NFL, and the man who personified the Vikings was the old man, Bill Brown, who had lived with the team through its worst season (1962—only two victories) and its best (1970—12 victories, spoiled by a resounding defeat in the Super Bowl).

Brown personified the Vikings in every respect except one: attire. He still dresses the way he did when he went to high school in the middle '50s. He dresses so square they can even tell it's square in Minneapolis. "J.C. Penney color coordinates," says Fran Tarkenton, the quarterback. "That's what Bill Brown wears."

And Tarkenton is his friend.

If Bill Brown represents the guts of the Vikings, the defensive line is the heart. The defensive line is awesome—Carl Eller at one end, Jim Marshall at the other, Gary Larsen and Alan Page in between. This is their seventh season together, and although they may, as a unit, be getting a little long in the tooth, their teeth will still kill you. Page is a defensive line unto himself, the only lineman ever to be named MVP in the NFL over a full season; Marshall, who will turn 36 before the Super Bowl, once saved himself from freezing on a snowmobile expedition stranding by burning cash money; and Eller, all six foot, six inches of him, is the reason the Minnesota Vikings stand so smartly at attention during the pre-game playing of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

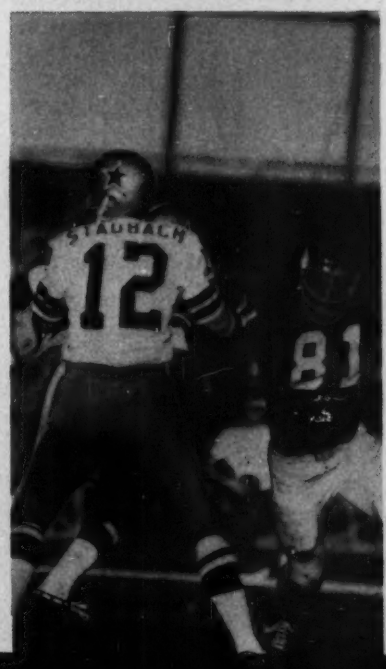
The brains: quarterback Fran Tarkenton, right. *The guts: fullback Bill Brown,* below. *The heart: end Carl Eller,* No. 81, *and the rest of the defensive line.*



During training camp, Carl Eller takes the rookies aside and teaches them how to stand for the national anthem. He is the most respected music-appreciation teacher in the whole world.

The fifth defensive lineman is relatively unknown. His name is Bob Lurtsema, and he replaces Gary Larsen on passing situations. Lurtsema has played a lot this season, because every team that goes up against Minnesota and its front four very quickly finds itself facing passing situations.

Lurtsema used to play for the New York Giants. In 1971, he was the player representative on the Giants. One day, the owner of the Giants, Wellington Mara, walked up to Lurtsema and said, "Bob, I haven't been as close to the players this year as I like to be. Would you do me a favor and check around and find out how the boys feel about me?" Mara thinks of his team as one big family, and he likes the whole family to be happy, even on their way to a 4-10 season.



Lurtsema checked around and reported back to Mara. "Well," said Lurtsema, "the boys don't like you."

The Giants promptly placed Lurtsema on waivers.

The Vikings picked him up for $100.

To belabor the anatomical analogy, Fran Tarkenton is the brains of the Vikings. Tarkenton is smart enough to realize how thin the line can be between success and failure in the National Football League. He began his career in Minnesota, then served a five-year sentence with the Giants, then rejoined the Vikings last year. The Vikings were 6-4 10 weeks into the 1972 season; that made them, in almost everyone's mind, a mediocre football team. The Vikings were 9-1 10 weeks into the 1973 season; that made them, in almost everyone's mind, a super football team. Tarkenton is one of the few who knows precisely the difference between the two seasons: fourteen points. Minnesota's first four defeats in 1972 were by margins of three, two, two and three points, and at that stage of last season, a familiar cry was being heard: Fran Tarkenton is a good quarterback, but he can't win championships, he can't win big games, he's a loser.

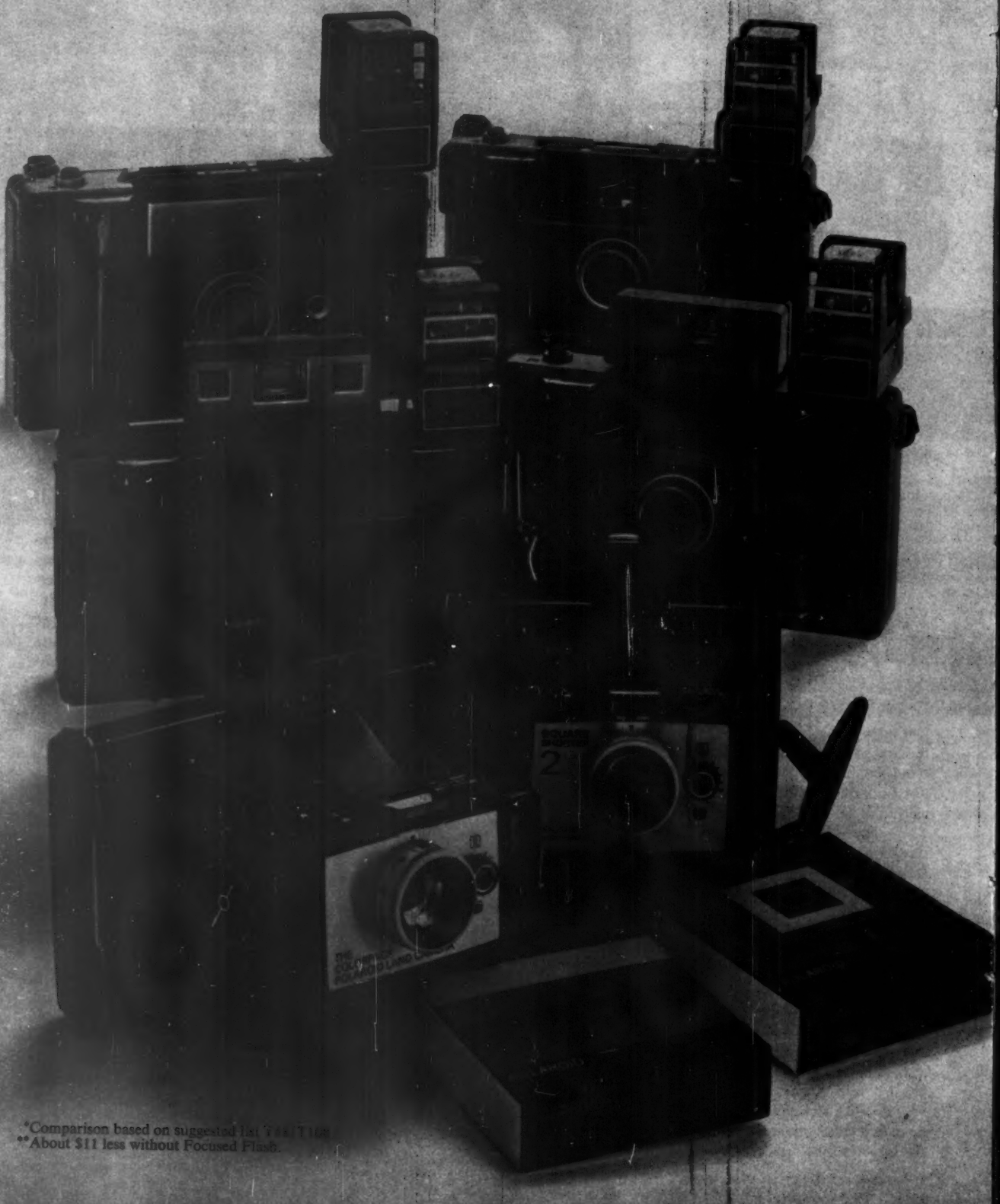
"Now that you're 9-1," I said to Tarkenton the other day, "what do you say to all those people who used to say you weren't a winner?"

"Nothing," said Tarkenton.

"Nothing? How can you say nothing? You must have terrific self-control."

"Not at all," said Tarkenton. "I just can't find any of them these days." ●

Instant joy.



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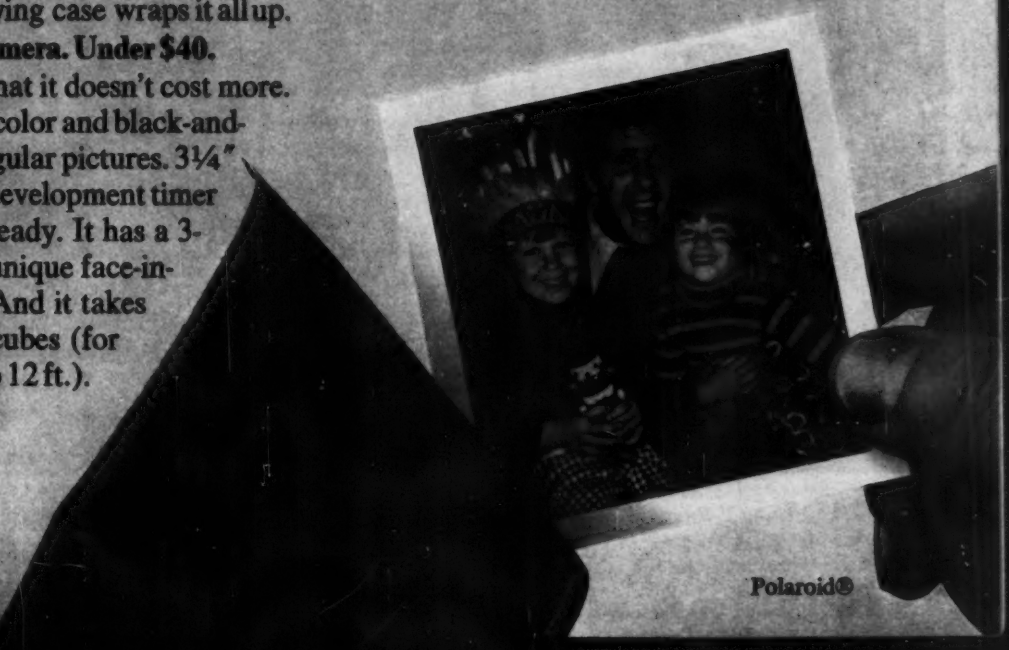

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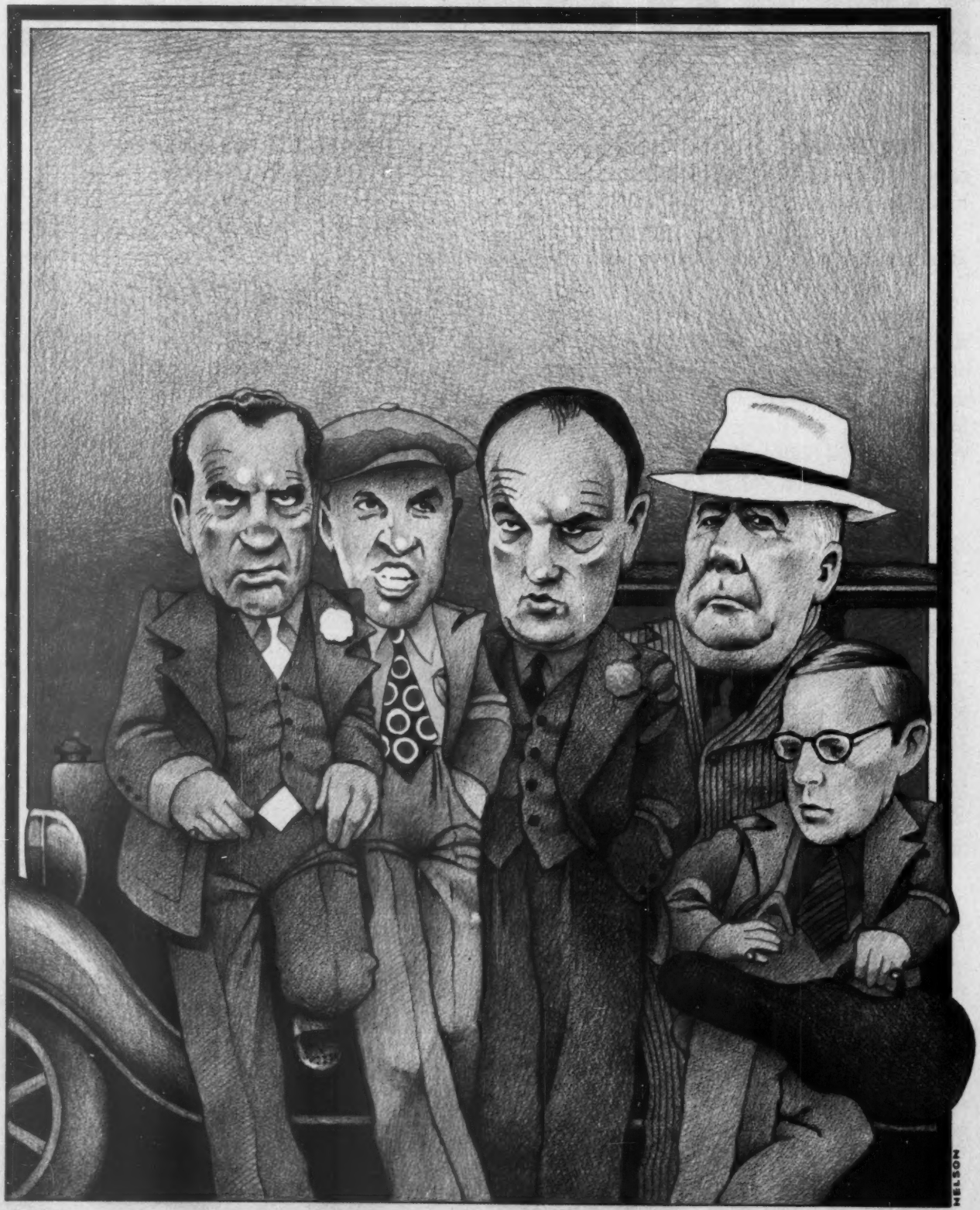
NELSON

"No criminals who even half plan a burglarly get tackled on the scene. The Nixon outfit was caught in the middle of a job, and shame on them"

The Protestant Joey Gallo

By Jimmy Breslin

I have in my time reported on two terribly inept criminal organizations, the Gallo gang of 51 President Street, Brooklyn, and the Nixon outfit of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C. I see no difference, except religious. Both groups, the Catholic Gallos and Protestant Nixons, only prove further the rule set forth by the great Fat Thomas: "Ninety-five percent of the people in crime don't belong in it because they're no good at it." In the case of the Gallos, their difficulty stemmed from poor usage of the gun; the gang that couldn't shoot straight. The Nixon outfit has become famous as the only group of organized criminals in recent years to be caught in the middle of a burglary. On the scene, gloves on, flashlights probing, the breathing shallow, and here come the cops for coffee. Usually, the people who are caught in the direct act of burglary are loners and strays; junkies blindly smashing a front window, young kids tripping burglar alarms, bums and cripples staggering around in ludicrous circumstances. My friend Walter was caught in his wheelchair with his lap full of fur coats on the fifth floor of a loft building. The detectives shut off the elevators, and when Walter got hungry he surrendered. But no group of criminals that takes the time to sit down and even half plan a burglary ever winds up being tackled on the scene. Oh, burglars do get caught later on: when somebody gets drunk in a bar and babbles or somebody gets caught trying to sell hot goods or somebody else cracks to a prosecutor in exchange for a free ride. No matter then how the story of Watergate changes and evolves over the months and years to come, the central issue always will be the same: the Nixon outfit was caught in the middle of a job and shame on them.

As the outfit tried to get out of trouble, it became only more obvious, more slapstick and almost totally Brooklyn South.

Joseph Gallo to Detective Lieutenant Vic Kaufman, Brooklyn South Homicide, who asked about a body in the street: "What could I tell you?"

Carmine Persico Jr. of rival Profaci outfit to same detective about same body: "What could I tell you?"

J. Fred Buzhardt of the Nixon outfit to reporters after he announced the tapes were lost: "What can I tell you?"

The Nixon tapes themselves did not matter. What does anybody care about tapes? If you have any decency at all, you must detest all tapes in a court. It was the form of the purported loss of the tapes, the obstruction of justice and the contempt of court by lying that most revealed the criminal mind, habit and alibi ability of the Nixon outfit. The matter intrigued me so much that upon leaving my house in Queens, New York City, each day, I walked past the subway entrance to my usual E and F trains and went down the hill to LaGuardia Airport and took the shuttle to Washington to begin observing what seems to be the long, often imperceptible process of Richard Nixon first trying to retain his position, then trying to avoid disgrace and, always at the bottom, the thing that his own people admit frightens them the most: working to keep himself and those with him from going to jail.

In the course of these daily trips to Washington instead of Broadway, there have been some dramatic moments that probably will live forever in history books, or at least as long as there is a country to write history about. One of which was the noontime in Washington with the front row of the House crowded with congressmen waving to the Speaker Carl Albert, demanding time to get up and call for impeachment or for a committee to investigate the impeachment of Richard Nixon. And over in the White House, Nixon and his lawyers, Charles Alan Wright, J. Fred Buzhardt and Leonard Garment, conferred. At 2 p.m. the lawyers were to be in the Federal Court, and the plan at first was to inform Federal Judge John Sirica that the President would not bow to a court order to surrender tape recordings of conversations held in his office. But now, with the country in an uproar over a President who was said to be lawless, there were second thoughts. And on the floor of the House of Representatives, Thomas Ludlow Ashley of Ohio recalled that his great-grandfather had led the call for impeachment of Andrew Johnson, and Congressman Ashley told the House, "My great-grandfather was wrong. He did it entirely for political reasons. This is a different situation. This is a matter of rule of law and, Mr. Speaker, I move that the House Judiciary Committee commence an investigation to see if there are legal grounds for impeachment of Richard Nixon." Others waited to speak after Ashley, and the tension in the House was high. And at 2 p.m., in the crowded, windowless second floor courtroom in the United States District Courthouse, Judge John Sirica came onto the bench, his head nodding with just this little suggestion of impatience, anger perhaps, and when he sat down and faced Charles Alan Wright, the Nixon outfit lawyer, you could feel the cold coming from Sirica. His radiation was that of cold, wet sidewalks in the winter.

Wright rose. Tall, his hair combed to make himself look as much like John Wayne as possible. Brown suit, lime shirt, brown tie. Earlier, Congressman Hugh Carey of Brooklyn had told me that Wright had been shipping his resume around the Hill to let everybody know that

Contributing Editor Breslin wrote the best-selling novel World Without End, Amen.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BILL NELSON

he was available for the next seat on the Supreme Court.

Wright, his voice coming out of a dry throat, told the judge that "This President does not defy the law." As opposed to other Presidents who always defied the law? Wright then said the White House sure would be turning over the tapes.

The reporters scrambled for the phones. I never have seen that done in my life in news, and up on the Hill the enormous tension dissolved, for the one day anyway, and I guess it all was and will be an incredible scene for political scientists and historians. But as far as I was concerned, I was not covering Washington; I was doing what I always have been more interested in doing—covering inept crime.

For when you look at Washington today, from Watergate to the Ellsberg break-in to plumbers to tapes and lost tapes, you can see that President Nixon really should be living on President Street.

Nor should he be alone there. His entire outfit should go there with him. Pick any man, in any role, just look at any one of them, it doesn't matter who it is or what he does: a Nixon man is a Gallo man.

In Washington, late on the steaming afternoon of July 23, 1973, Alexander Porter Butterfield strode in all his brisk, Protestant magnificence into the New Senate Office Building. He went down to an office in the basement, a windowless office with a couple of desks and chairs, and he sat down with two Republican counsels to the Senate Select Committee investigating the Presidential campaign.

Alex Butterfield was not a major figure. He had been in the White House as an assistant to Nixon. His job had been to carry papers in to Nixon and put them on his desk and to pick up papers from Nixon's desk and carry them out. The papers all had tags on them. Red, yellow, blue, the colors signifying the varying degrees of importance of the papers. All the way from "Super Secret" to "Eyes Only." In the administration of a Nixon Democracy nothing is open. Alexander Butterfield had, as a result of his service to Nixon, brushed up against questioners once before this day. It seems that during the Nixon re-election campaign somebody had given Butterfield a suitcase with $350,000 in it, one of those suitcases the Stans, Sloan, Strachan, Haldeman people always seemed to pass around, and Alex took it with him to Alexandria, Virginia, and stashed it in a friend's safety deposit box. A few days later when he went to get the money he reported to the White House that he had only $328,000 at this time. Somebody, the friend, or mice, perhaps, had swung $22,000 out of the safe deposit box. The criminal grand jury investigating the Watergate mess had called Alex as a witness, and Alex went without a lawyer to see the prosecutors. Alex said, "I don't want anybody to think I'm guilty." He then told them about the missing money. After which he called the White House and told everybody where he had just been.

"I hope I didn't get in trouble," Alex said to a friend in the White House.

"Well, you can't get in trouble unless you lied," the friend said.

"Oh, I didn't lie," Alex said.

"That's good, Alex," the friend said through the angina pain.

"I told them about the money and everything," Alex said.

"Goodbye, Alex," the man on the White House end said.

Now here was Alex making his second appearance as a witness, again without a lawyer, and again without the White House knowing about it, and at the end of the interview, at 5 p.m. on a hot Friday, with all of Washington heading for beaches and pools and mountains, Alex Butterfield sat in this bare basement office, and Donald Sanders, one of the investigators, had a last wearying question. Somewhere back in the tangle of Watergate testimony, Henry Petersen, the Assistant Attorney General, had reported that Nixon had told him not to worry about the John Dean testimony, that he, Nixon, had a recording of that key April 15th meeting, and the recording would show that Dean was lying. Petersen was relieved to hear this. Later when Nixon was asked about the recording, Nixon said that what he meant was that he had dictated his recollections of that meeting onto a dictabelt. Nixon said he most certainly had no real recording of Dean and himself talking. But there had been among investigators low-key inquiring about a recording, much of it based on Dean's testimony that at one point on April 15th Nixon moved to the corner of the room as if to get away from some listening device. Therefore, on this day, as a duty to the investigation, Committee Counsel Sanders said to Butterfield, to conclude the generally non-productive interview, "Do you have any reason to believe that the April 15th meeting was recorded?"

> "By Sunday night, the White House guys were jammed into an office, muttering. Who ratted on them? Who was he and where was he?"

Alexander Porter Butterfield paused.

"Yes," Butterfield said.

"Why do you think so?"

Butterfield then told them about the secret Nixon taping system throughout the White House.

By the time he was through, Alex Butterfield had done it all to the Ship of State. And then he went home to his wife and family.

By Sunday morning, somebody in the outfit's headquarters had the word that the Watergate committee somehow knew of the magic secret taping system. The rumor chilled the White House. When the rumor became fact, the level of tension and anger reached a new high. Who was the rat that ratted on the White House? Who was he and where was he? Calls were made to round up the mob. By Sunday night, the White House guys were jammed into an office, just like a mob in Brooklyn, packed together, muttering, pondering this new lance at their chests. The Don Beppe of the mob, Nixon, sat elsewhere with his cortisone jowls, waiting for one of his soldiers to bring him the news.

The outfit jammed into the one office went about it just as gangsters do. "First, let's figure out who could have told," somebody said. They began to draw up a list of those who knew about the taping machines. Steve Bull, the White House aide. Then James Rowley, head of the Secret Service. Then the man who replaced Steve Bull, Alexander Butterfield. Butterfield!

"Let me call him," somebody said. The room fell silent. The operator found Butterfield at home.

"Hello, Alex."

"I was just going to call you," Butterfield said.

"Oh, you were just going to call me?"

Hands clutched chests throughout the room. Why was Butterfield going to call them? The dirty rat! He couldn't have! Rat bastard stool pigeon! Canary bastard! He couldn't be. Not Alex!

"Ah, Alex, you, ah, haven't been testifying in front of any grand juries or committees lately, have you?"

"Yes, I have."

"Oh."

"I was over at the Watergate committee on Friday."

"You were? And what did you tell them, Alex?"

"I told them about the taping system."

They were through. He had, Alexander Porter Butterfield, ratted on the

entire White House. They had been sitting there like a mob, Nixon, a German general or so and then all these young Protestant hoods. They had been sitting on major evidence, the tapes, telling nobody about them, concealing them from Senate, courts and nation, and now this most damaging of all information was out. It had been out since Friday night and this was Sunday.

"Alex," the man said, "this happened on Friday. Why didn't you tell us right away?"

"I didn't want to spoil your weekend," Alex Butterfield said.

After Alex, any difference between the Nixon outfit and the rest of the people in this country who are in crime disappeared. Casually, enjoying it, the Nixon people embraced the oldest rule of a defendant: it is much better to be called a liar than to be behind bars.

H.R. Haldeman sat in the witness stand in the second-floor courtroom of Judge John Sirica. Haldeman had his hands clasped. Because of his big German anvil of a forehead, it was impossible to see his eyes, but his hair was growing. No more crewcut, no more white scalp showing; good clean Protestant white scalp. H.R. Haldeman was the first person I ever heard of who went out and let his hair *grow* in order to impress a judge.

"I'm not able to remember," Haldeman said. "I'm not sure whether the additional tapes were requested that day or on a previous day."

To another question, Haldeman said, "My best recollection is, the reason I did not listen to them is that I wasn't part of the conversation."

The Special Prosecutor, Richard Ben-Veniste, then asked Haldeman: "Now, when you placed the call from Newport Beach to the White House, to whom did you speak?"

"Again, I have no specific recollection."

"Well, did you speak to the President, or to whom did you speak?"

"As I testified earlier, I can't remember. It could have been the President, it could have been someone else."

Question (by District Attorney Turkus): And where were you at this time?

Answer (by defendant Albert Anastasia): I was in the Miami.

Q. Miami?

A. Yeah. The Miami.

Q. How can you tell this court you were in Miami, when it is a fact that you were in New Orleans on this date?

A. I thought I was in the Miami. Sometimes I don't know the difference between the Miami and the New Orleans.

When you get out the front door of the federal district courthouse in Washington, the Capitol is to the left, a walk of two or three blocks, straight up the hill. If you stare at it long enough, the great white domed building, climbing out of the green and yellow of late fall, takes on majesty. A great history book sitting against the sky. And down to the right, you can't see it from the courthouse but it is only a 10-minute walk, is the White House. Of course, you're conscious of it. What else did you ever learn in grammar school except to be conscious of it? You learned the Pledge of Allegiance, the Star Spangled Banner, the Monitor and the Merrimac and the White House.

But then you turn around from the front door of the courthouse and go up to the second-floor courtroom where the hearings on the tapes drag on, and now you're not in an atmosphere of American history any more. For the second floor courtroom reminds you only of the courthouse in Long Island City, in Queens, the old courthouse where they held gambler's court.

Because here on the witness stand is Rose Mary Woods, pinched and proper, the secretary to Richard M. Nixon, and she is telling the court that she must have erased the tapes when she answered the phone and kept her foot on the pedal and that is the reason a whole 18 minutes of the tape has only a hum on it.

Q. (By Judge Sirica): Why did you not advise the court of this when you testified previously?

A. (By Rose Mary Woods): I am dreadfully sorry.

Q. (By Queens County assistant district attorney Sullivan): You took the betting slips and put them into your mouth?

A. (By defendant Moe Tear): I don't know that.

Q. And you swallowed the 22 betting slips?

A. All I know is that the cop hurt my head when he was trying to pull my mouth open.

Q. When did you finally open your mouth?

A. When I asked the cop for a drink of water because my throat hurt.

So in my book, Rose Mary Woods, with her great foot motion on the pedal, placed herself right alongside Moe Tear, who swallowed 22 betting slips in one gulp. The woman destroyed evidence. What would you have the woman do, bring evidence to court and get everyone in trouble?

While Miss Woods and the Haldemans and the rest of them shuttled in and out of court and kept the tape hearings dragging on and on—the better for the nation to become mixed up and tired and forgetful—there was a true lesson in American government to be learned out of it: nobody tells the truth in courtrooms around the country. The average citizen, who never enters a courtroom over a lifetime, actually believes that, once the hand is raised and the clerk swears the witness in, lightning will strike the man who tells a lie. Or that the judge will go berserk at the first untruth and throw the lying witness into jail for perjury. Well, this does not happen in court. A courthouse is a place where people lie to survive. Nobody understands this better than the Nixon outfit. And nobody, in my time covering crime, has been any better at it than the Nixon outfit. They are very clumsy at burglary, but the Nixons do understand that, truly, it is far better to be called a liar in the White House than to be behind bars in Lewisburg. ●

SCAVENGING FOR SALVATION IN LAS VEGAS

By John Gregory Dunne

During the summer of a very bad year, a reporter moves to the Strip, not to gamble, but to come to grips with himself by eavesdropping on others

In the summer of my nervous breakdown, I went to live in Las Vegas, Clark County, Nevada. It had been a bad spring, it had been a bad winter, it had been a bad year. In the fall I had gone to take an insurance physical. The insurance office was on the 19th floor of an antiseptic new building on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles. The examining physician's name was Virgil Isador Kerides. He was, he informed me, a Greek Jew. He said it was a problem. I am always being told things like that on first meeting, being told by strange women that they have cancer of the uterus, by men on airplanes that they have a colored mistress in St. Louis. Never black, never Negro, always "colored." I have never learned how to react, never comprehended why I am selected for these intimacies. Perhaps it is a penance for the deaf ear I turn to the problems of friends. I cannot bear to listen to why they are leaving their wives or how they are treating their alcoholism. "Really," I say to these strangers with uterine malignancies, or "I see." I never do see.

What I did see about Virgil Isador Kerides was that he was wearing one black shoe and one brown shoe and that a daub of egg yolk had adhered to his tie. I am interested in things like that, as I am interested in the layout and color coding of parking lots. I am interested in overheard conversations in restaurants, in the mosaic of petty treasons that decorate small lives. It is a hobby without emotional investment. I wonder by what act of fate a promising medical student becomes an aging doctor for an insurance company, wearing one black and one brown shoe. I wonder and do not ask. My wife says I am clinically detached.

Virgil Isador Kerides examined me. Blood pressure normal. EKG normal. EEG normal. Prostate normal. No known diseases. Chronic indigestion probably due to overweight. The policy was for $100,000, payments $450 per quarter. I was 37 years old and I was insurable, a good risk.

I put on my clothes. There was one thing, Virgil Isador Kerides said. It was not medical, it would not hold up the issuing of the policy. Had anyone ever told me that I had soft shoulders?

I asked what it meant.

"Nothing. They're just . . . soft. You've got soft shoulders."

Soft shoulders. If ever there seemed a perfect metaphor for my life that season, that was it. I did not seek another diagnosis. I was not concerned about muscular atrophy or neurological disintegration or pulpy bone marrow. With some dim psychic instinct Virgil Isador Kerides, who found it a problem being a Greek Jew, had intuited what I already knew, that there were other renegade cells eating away at the tissues of my life.

The metastasis had started a year or two before. When I was younger, and other people turned 35, I found it amusing to send a two-word birthday telegram. The wire simply read, "Halfway home." But the spring I reached 35, the joke suddenly seemed pallid. Perhaps it was because I began to find the names of classmates appearing in the obituary notes of my college alumni magazine. "After a short illness . . ." the notice would begin.

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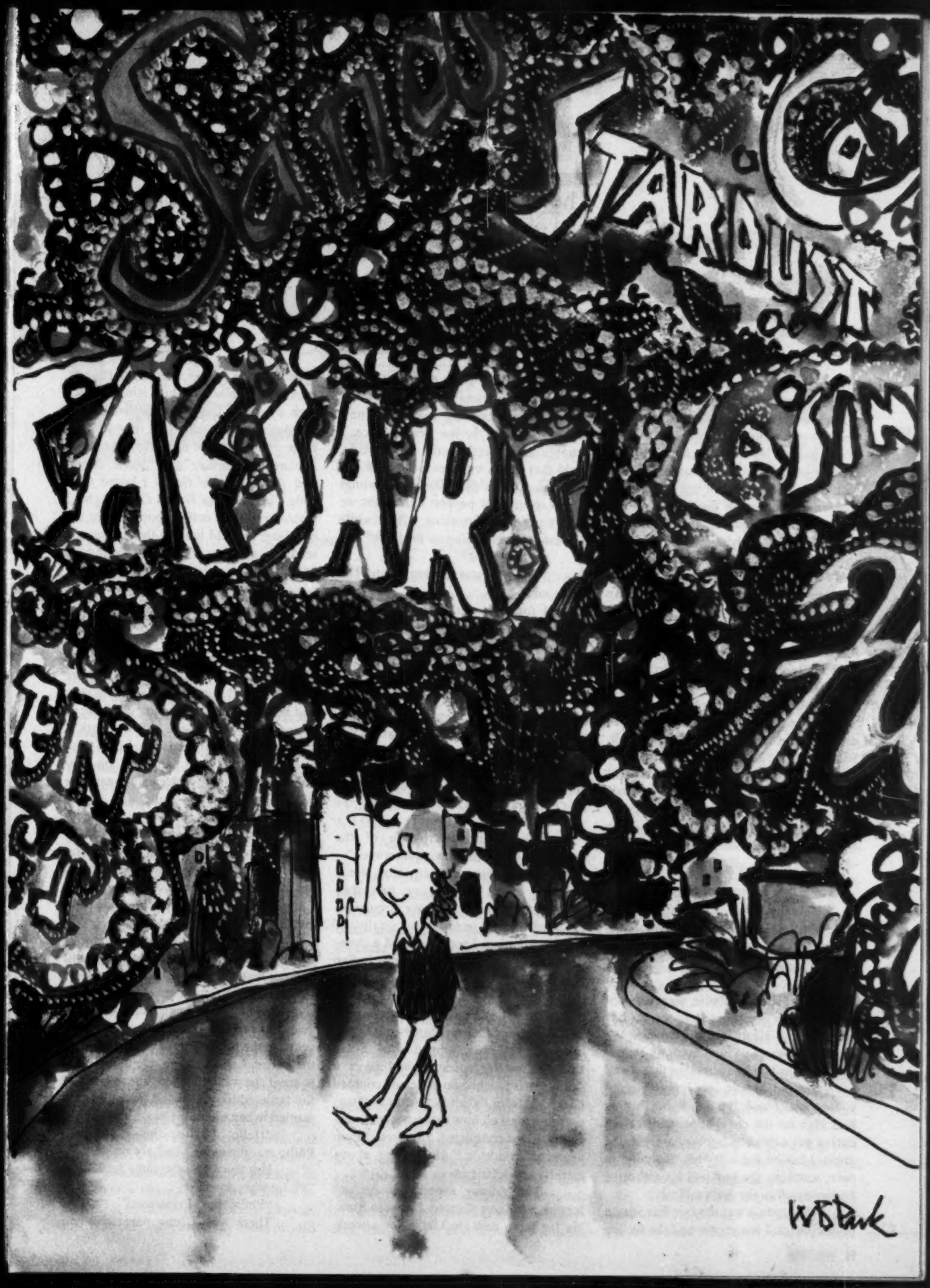

STARDUST
FAIRS
ENT

The headline had already formed in my mind: "Crash kills FDR son and 92 others"

It was a chilling phrase. There was at least something youthful and abandoned about a drunken-driving accident or skiing into a tree. I began to note in my diary the date of my annual medical checkup. I examined myself for lumps and bumps. I heard with dark dread a doctor tell me that he was sending a piece of tissue "down for a biopsy." I became quite simply, for no real reason, terrified of dying.

The obsession evidenced itself in small ways at first. I hated to fly on planes with minor celebrities and second-string newscasters and the failed offspring of prominent people. I got off a crowded flight once rather than sit next to Elliott Roosevelt. The headline had already formed in my mind: "Crash Kills FDR Son and 92 Others."

I began to wonder if my death would merit a "Milestone" in *Time*. Would the editors consider me "Milestone" material? "He used to work here," I could imagine them saying, "never made senior editor."

"What did he do after he left? Or was he fired?"

"Left, I think."

"Wrote a couple of books."

"Really."

"It's between him and that Dionne who checked out."

"Let's go for the quint."

My temper, always volatile, turned explosive. One day on Sunset Boulevard a boy in an Austin-Healy sideswiped me. We squared off there at high noon on Sunset Boulevard, a boy in a buckskin jacket and a 37-year-old lunatic in a grey Firebird convertible. I took the first swing, hitting him high on the cheekbone, and for my daring got a cowboy boot squarely in the groin. I lay on the sidewalk, moaning in pain, watching the boy and his girl drive insolently off in the Austin-Healy.

At home it was the familiar season of discontent. I sometimes had the feeling that we went from crisis to crisis like old repertory actors going from town to town, every crisis an opening night with new depths to plumb in the performance. I bought a jackknife; she said it was atavistic. I said that living with her was like living with one piranha fish. She said dealings with women aged people. One night we lay in bed without speaking. After a while she said, "Are you lying on my book?"

"Which book?"

"The one I was reading before. The cookbook."

I found it under the covers and handed it to her. It was Elizabeth David's *French Provincial Cooking* and was folded to a recipe for *tête de veau* vinaigrette: "When it is good, which is to say when it is served really tender and hot and you get a comparatively lean piece and the vinaigrette sauce has been well mixed, then it is quite good. More often, it is repellent."

In the morning, I said, "Did you finish the book?"

"It gave me a headache."

"Why?"

"The particular rhythm of the sentences. They upset my alpha waves."

In the absence of anything else, I began to drive, the freeways first, then longer expeditions, day-long excursions designed only to improve the quality of my consumption. I reconnoitered a clothing store in Santa Barbara, a Sears in San Diego. One morning I went out to buy a loaf of bread for breakfast and finally picked it up at a Safeway in San Francisco. It is 476 miles to San Francisco. On another foray, I was stopped outside San Luis Obispo for speeding and given a drunk test. I touched my nose and counted backward from 100 and when the highway patrolman asked how many years of education I had completed, I replied, "Four years of Princeton." He looked at me queerly and let me go.

The driving expeditions became longer, more complicated. I went to Brawley for three days, to Ukiah for a week. Speed was the release, 135 m.p.h. flat-out, the risk of a blowout exhilarating. It was a time of carhops and cocktail waitresses. All day long I would stay in my motel room in El Centro or Lone Pine and watch *Dialing for Dollars* and *Secret Storm* and *The Newlywed Game*. I lusted after Julia Child on *The French Chef*. Nights I would cruise the coffee shops and in the morning, I would look in the mirror and see the beginnings of a dewlap around the neck.

One afternoon in the fall I said I was going to New York that night to watch the World Series. Not at the ball park, but on television. She never asked why our television set was not good enough; she understood. She understood the driving and why I had not worked in over a year and the fear of dying and the necessity of taking the TWA red-eye to New York. I stayed at the apartment of a friend who was out of town. As it happened, his television set was out of order and I heard the World Series on the radio and in the evenings I would go to the Frank E. Campbell funeral home on Madison Avenue at 81st to see if I knew anyone who had died. I saw no one and never ventured out of the apartment except to go to Campbell's and to buy Oreo cookies and Heath bars at the delicatessen.

The World Series was over in five games. I needed to get in touch and still had not made a connection. I tried to sort out the primal experiences—birth, marriage, the first sexual encounter. I was 20 years old and she a prostitute of uncertain years. In the fifth inning of the last game of the Series, I checked the telephone book to see if she was still listed. She was still at the same address. I dialed the number. I wanted to see where the years had gone.

"Hello, Phyllis, this is Philip." Philip was the name I had always used.

Her voice had the same huskiness. "Philip who, dear?"

"Philip from Princeton."

There was a long pause. "When

was the last time I talked to you, dear?"

It had been nearly 17 years, but I lied. "I guess about five years ago."

"Jesus, darling," she said, "I'm 62 years old."

In the spring I bought a baseball mitt for myself and one for my daughter. I was 37 and she was three. I saw a Victor Mature Festival in a deserted closet-sized theater run by two homosexuals in Santa Monica, and followed it a few days later with a Lon McAllister Festival. The projectionist wore a fishnet tank shirt and laughed hysterically at *Home In Indiana.* I was the only person in the theater and he came down and talked to me until he had to change reels. He said he had a passion for Walter Brennan and that his father was an Air Force colonel and that he was moving to Cuzco the next day. Just cruising, he said, I'll just be cruising. There was something about him that made me, for the first time in months, want to go back to work. There is a therapeutic aspect to reporting that few like to admit. What is a reporter except a kind of house detective, scavenging through the bureau drawers of men's lives, searching for the minor vice, the half-forgotten lapse that is stored away like a dirty pair of drawers. Reporting anesthetizes one's own problems. There is always someone in a deeper emotional drift, or even grift, than you, someone to whom you can ladle out understanding as if it were a charitable contribution, one free meal from the psychic soup kitchen, just that one, no more, any more would entail responsibility, and responsibility is what one is trying to avoid in the first place.

The question was where to go to find that perfect place where one could look for salvation without commitment. And then one day I was driving on La Brea Boulevard in Hollywood and saw a new billboard high atop the office of a credit dentist. On a brown field there was a picture of an enormous roulette wheel and a gold-lettered legend that said simply, with a Delphic absence of apostrophe: "VISIT LAS VEGAS BEFORE YOUR NUMBERS UP."

And so I did, barely.

In Las Vegas, I found an apartment on Desert Inn Road. It was called the Royal Polynesian, and in each unit there was a black-and-white television set, a hot plate, a plastic dinner service for two and two peanut-butter jars reincarnated as water glasses. The center of social activity at the Royal Polynesian was the swimming pool. Every afternoon it was full of aging show girls, their looks and figures still fairly intact, women without men, careful not to let their hair get wet in the pool.

It seemed the perfect place to spend that summer, a paradigm of anti-life. I did not gamble, cared not at all about the Mob and even less about Howard Hughes. But there were other stories and other people, and there were days when I told myself that through the travail of others I might come to grips with myself, that I might, as it were, find absolution through voyeurism.

The first time I ever saw Jackie Kasey he was warming up the audience for one of the top acts on the Strip. It was a tough audience for a warm-up comic and the job was already tough enough. The warm-up comic has 45 minutes and functions basically as a high colonic, getting the audience through dinner, one trip to the john, a little juice on board, loosening them up for the headliner. He stands up there, a guy with six tuxedos in his closet, every one with the sky-blue lining, and he opens the tuxedo and gives the audience a hint of the lining and it looks like he's hustling After Six. He snaps the microphone cord as if it were a bullwhip, shoots out the pinky finger and launches a fusillade of one liners.

"Speaking of Italians . . ." He had not been speaking of Italians, but there is not a stand-up comic in Vegas who does not change his line of thought with, "Speaking of . . ."

The audience laughs, mechanically at first, then more appreciatively. The minutes are passing, the headliner is getting ready backstage, the creamed chicken has not started to react chemically with the creme de menthe parfait to block the lower intestinal tract.

"And speaking of Jews, I got so many caps on my teeth my mother's chicken soup bends my mouth."

Back and forth across the stage, the sweat soaking through the blue lining of the After Six. "And listen, you ever see a

Jew schlepping with the football? The Jew is the team treasurer."

He is the liege of the star, funny but not too funny, the headliner must never be upstaged.

The dishes are being cleared away, it is time to go. Time is up, the star awaits. "God love you, laze and gemmen, you've been a great audience." The two-handed kiss. "Peace and love, peace and love."

Upstairs to the second-floor dressing room, coated with sweat, temper out of sorts. A quick shower, then three hours to the next show. Stomach in knots, can't eat, can't drink, can't even nap.

Jackie Kasey, who performs under a different name, was 40 years old and had spent 20 years working one-night stands at bowling alleys and smokers and automobile dealers' district sales meetings. He had learned his trade the hard way in places like the Chart House in Milwaukee and Leo's Supper Club in Peoria, Illinois, and the Cool Club in Cairo and the Brentwood Country Club in Lexington, Kentucky. His Girl with the Itchy Twitchy routine and his Dangerous Dan, the Used Car Man, routine went over big at the Pink Panther Room in Akron and the Club Capri in Cincinnati, but he flopped at the Copacabana in New York and went back to club dates and playing four different spots a night in the Borscht Belt. He started in Vegas downtown on Fremont Street and then was the comedian in an ice show on the Strip, and then was signed to warm up for the big acts. He had made $108,000 the year before I met him, but still nobody knew his name.

While I was in Vegas, Jackie got his first headline appearance in the lounge of a Strip hotel, a very nervous man making $10,000 a week. He had worked up a new routine for his shot in the lounge. No more the stand-up comic in an After Six with a sky-blue lining. No more Tonio, the Timid Toreador, no more Dangerous Dan, the Used Car Man. Jackie was a theme comic now: check that—a theme *comedian*. Corbett Monica and Pat Henry, they were comics, but a comedian dealt not in jokes but in *character*, a character who was *characterized*, a character with *characterization*, and the characterization gave the comedian what he never had before, and that was an *identity*, and what the identity did was make you *identifiable*, and if you were identifiable, you could be *marketed*, turned into a *product*.

The product that Jackie Kasey had hoped to become was Brother JayJay. Brother JayJay was an evangelist. Seedy, conniving, opportunistic, the epitome of likable low cunning, the major-domo of a moth-eaten Elmer Gantry tent show. Jackie had planned his wardrobe with extreme care. A tambourine, cheap rings covering every knuckle, a lavender silk frock coat and matching pants. Singing and clapping from a white-robed sisterhood of black gospel singers. The only trouble was the room was empty, there was no playback from the audience. That, and also the act was not very good, it needed work.

It was like a revival played to an empty tent. I watched fascinated from the bar. Watching a comic flailing against an indifferent audience seemed a refraction of my own depression. Vegas has a way of co-opting burned-out cases; there is a sense that failed expectations are the mean, the norm. Here was a jester to the affluent proletariat; here was comedy essentially prejudiced, not in the racial sense, but in reinforcing resistance to change. It seemed no accident that kings employed jesters; they deflated individual pretensions, deviations from established values.

In the lobby with me after the show, Jackie Kasey's eyes roamed the casino restlessly. There were brochures of Brother JayJay scattered about the lobby and he checked every location to make sure that the supply was not running out. It was nearly 4 a.m. and he bounded across the casino, stopping at each table,

You sometimes hear someone say, "I've got more juice than Minute Maid." That means he's got friends

saying, "You wanna be saved sister? I is Brother JayJay."

He settled into a chair in the bar, clapping his hands for a drink. "Honey, I'll have a Scotch and soda pop-a-lop-a-dop and a couple of cube-a-loob-boobs, heavy on the bevy, the light kind." The double talk was something he used with strangers and menials, almost as a way of making connections. Out of my own inertia I found myself carried along on the pointless tide of his compulsion to connect.

He rattled on, his conversation a compendium of triumphs, story after story about best friends who had to step aside and watch him rise, because that was the nature of the business, friends who did not have it on nights when he did. I watched and said nothing, with a rising sense of exhilaration that I was onto a good thing, the $10,000-a-week never-was and never-will-be, and I tried not to think that ultimately I would betray him.

Trying to interrupt was like trying to hold back a tidal wave with a sieve. He would stare open-mouthed as if I had been speaking Urdu, eyes dead, jaw slack, then would snap his finger at a waitress. "Dis is Brudda JayJay, you wanna be saved?"

Again the double-talk order for another drink. Then: "You got to get the little people behind you. The waitresses and the bartenders. They talk about you, the little people. They tell the customers to come to the show. You can't make it in Vegas without the little people."

It was as if he were talking about a serving class of three-foot, two-inch midgets.

"The thing about Brother JayJay, he can be marketed. You know, like a product. T-shirts, records, Brother JayJay games. Dolls, balloons, not just the saloons, into the stores. A product. Lunch boxes, diaries, comic books. You ever heard of Monopoly? It's a game. We can do something like that with Brother JayJay's land company or Brother JayJay's insurance company. Fun things."

Time took on a kind of pattern. For days on end I did not leave the apartment. I subsisted on a diet of Clark bars and Hydrox cookies and Hostess Twinkies and, when I was feeling flush, cans of macadamia nuts. I drank Coca-Cola out of deposit bottles because I was sure that the taste in the no-return bottles was different, sweeter, not so much carbonation. I ate Neccos, the little host-like candy wafers, and Oreos. I ate cube steak and Macintosh apples and Ritz crackers with Laura Scudder crunchy peanut butter.

I got fat.

The summer heat burned into the cortex of the brain. It was something tangible, hallucinogenic, dipping under 100 degrees only after midnight, so hot outside that a heat headache seemed a permanent, terminal condition. Even the rain was no release. It was obscurely unsettling to watch the thermometer in the tower clock of the Sahara blinking 112° through the rain. Only the air conditioning subverted the tyranny of the weather. There was Muzak piped into the apartment, Mantovani and the Melochrino Strings, and I played the radio all day. I grew fond of a call-in program with hints for homemakers.

For a long time the only person I saw was Jackie. It was a friendship corrupted by a knowledge that I did not share with him, a knowledge that he was a great character, a character to be cultivated like a rare orchid. If I had not found Jackie, I doubt that I would have stayed long in Vegas. And so I nurtured him, exchanging confidences, opening doors into the darkest alcoves of my life, creating in him a trust I knew I would ultimately violate. He became expansive, opened up; I took notes and felt badly about it. We went everywhere together.

It was noon and the school day was just beginning at the Casino Dealers School, Inc. Marvin Berlin, president, sat at his desk and watched the students trail in.

"Once a student graduates," I said, "is it hard for him to get a job in a casino?"

"It depends."

"On what?"

"It helps if he has some juice."

"What's juice?"

"I guess you'd call it pull. Or clout."

"It's important."

"Vegas runs on juice. You sometimes hear someone say, 'I've got more juice than Minute Maid.' That means he's got friends."

"What kind of friends?"

"In Vegas, it's best not to inquire."

"So if you've got juice, you can get a job?"

"Let's say it doesn't hurt. The easiest game to deal is blackjack, so that's where someone with the right connections can get a job easiest. You find that most blackjack dealers have a little juice. Maybe not so much as Minute Maid, but some."

"The same with craps?"

"Not so much, no. Craps is the toughest game to learn. There's too many payoffs for too many combinations. If you've got juice and you're smart, you're okay. If you've got juice and you're dumb, you're in another line of work."

"What about baccarat?"

"Baccarat is played with cash on the table and no chips. A $2,000 limit. That's a lot of cash on the table."

"So you need a lot of juice to deal baccarat?"

"To deal baccarat you've got to be a nephew of the Godfather."

I met Marvin Berlin the way I met everyone in Vegas: I called him on the telephone. I talked for hours on the telephone, mainly to kill time, but also to encourage the self-delusion that I was working, that I was getting a feel of the community, that I was surfeiting myself with local color. The telephoning had the same narcotic effect as driving the freeways. I studied the Yel-

low Pages as if they were the key to the universe, and then would dial an accordion instructor or an abdominal-support salesman. I talked to exterminators and contraceptive wholesalers, bail bondsmen and private detectives. I slept fitfully, an hour here, two hours there. I felt like an electronic Mr. Lonelyhearts. At three or four in the morning, people were somehow amenable to talking to a stranger on the telephone.

I had never met a private detective, which is why I called Buster Mano. He asked my name and where I was staying and then made an appointment for the following morning. His office was downtown, near the courthouse, on the ground floor of a parking garage, two rooms and the smell of small tragedy and petty defeat, of insignificant adultery and unpaid bills.

"Nice place, the Royal Polynesian," Buster Mano said. He was making instant coffee on the hot plate, which was under a huge photo blowup of Las Vegas. There was a box of Tootsie Rolls on the refrigerator and a case of Fritos on the floor and Buster Mano said take your pick. I tore open a bag of Fritos.

"Yes, sir, I know a lot of the folks at the Royal Polynesian," Buster Mano said.

I said I had the uneasy feeling that Buster Mano had done a make on me.

"What makes you think that?" he said.

"Instinct," I said.

"With that kind of instinct you should come in with me," he said.

"Then you did do a make?"

"Information is power." He said it without malice. He was a large bulky man with sad, quick eyes and, strangely out of context, small, immaculate hands, nails buffed, cuticles trimmed. They looked as if they had been transplanted onto the fatigued, greying mass of flesh that was the rest of him.

"You been here three weeks, you almost never go out," he said. "You're from L.A., you've got a wife, a kid, you got two cars, paid cash for one, paid off the other in three months, you own your house, you pay your bills. And last Thursday night you brought a colored lady home to your apartment at three o'clock in the morning, she left at quarter to four."

"How'd you find all that out?"

"I called the Royal Polynesian and told them I was investigating some stolen credit cards in your name. You pay by Diner's, I got your Diner's number."

"Terrific."

Buster Mano shrugged. "I called a friend of mine in L.A., he called a friend of his in the credit bureau. Then I called back the Royal Polynesian and said you were clean."

"Thanks," I said. I wondered what ever had possessed me to call Buster Mano. I was in way over my head.

"Listen," Buster Mano said, "everyone in Vegas knows whateveryone else is doing." He seemed to want to reassure me. "So what?"

I wonder now why I did not just get up and leave the office. I can only suggest that I felt at home in this confessional of the meaninglessly illicit. The fact was also that I liked Buster Mano. He was a man without illusions. He expected the worst and the worst did not mean much. He viewed life, his own especially, as a hapless patchwork of small strategies and minor betrayals. There was a complicity between us that was missing in my relationship with Jackie Kasey. Buster knew what I was up to and it did not bother him, if I got something on him, that was all right, he had something on me, too. Tit for tat. We're both in the Peeping-Tom racket, he liked to say, and he knew it made me uncomfortable.

I met Artha, a prostitute, because of my chronic insomnia. When I couldn't sleep and the late show was over, I would leave my apartment and wander through the casinos on the Strip. There is something restful about a casino at 5 a.m. The tourists

"You get your rocks off talking to hookers, is that it?" It was a remark that hit perilously close to home

have gone to bed, most of the tables have closed down and the slots are almost stilled. It is the time of the serious gamblers.

She was sitting in the keno lounge at the Flamingo. I remember that my immediate impression was of a corrupted nun. She was wearing a black pants suit with a white Peter Pan collar and an elaborate wig of sausage curls. She looked like one of those parochial-school girls I used to try to pick up when I was in my teens in Hartford, Conn. Artha was the memory of every ethnic that I had never, as we used to say, "got into." I could not take my eyes off her. I thought at first that she was playing keno, sitting there all alone at five in the morning, chewing on a black keno crayon, then bending over and writing feverishly on a keno ticket. She must have seen me staring at her, but she gave no indication.

Then she was paged by the hotel operator.

She got up, fluffed her sausage curls and crumbled the keno ticket into an ashtray. I watched her go to a house telephone, talk briefly into it, then leave.

I went back into the keno lounge and sat in the seat she had left. Desultorily I uncrumpled the keno ticket she had thrown into the ashtray. On the back of the ticket, in the same neat Palmer Penmanship hand that I had been taught by the Sisters of Mercy at Verbum Dei School in Hartford, was a verse. A poetry-writing hooker.

I was still giving the poem a close textual exegesis when I saw Artha come out of the elevator alone about an hour later. She took a stool at one of the service bars. Her poem in hand, I went over and sat next to her. "Would you like a drink?"

"You following me around?"

There seemed no way out of it. "I guess I am."

"A shot of milk on the rocks, creme de cocoa back," she told the bartender.

"That's a poet's drink," I said. My knack for the pickup had not improved much since those nights in the bars of East Hartford.

"You want to ball or something?"

"Actually, no."

"You get your rocks off talking to hookers, is that it?"

It was a remark that hit perilously close to home. I did like talking to hookers, I think out of some residual Catholic impression that as long as one did not handle the merchandise, one was committing only a venial andnot a mortal sin.

"Actually, I read your poem," I said. I had the desperate sense that I was playing out a scene in a situation comedy.

"Yeah?" she said.

"It had thought, imagination, rhythm, emotion, diction."

She looked at me dubiously. "How do you know so much?"

I said that I was a writer. It seemed an inadequate explanation, but it satisfied her.

"You want to know what I just did?" she said.

"What you always do, I guess."

"No, this was a first for me." She seemed animated, enthusiastic. "This guy, big winner in baccarat, 4,700 bucks, he wanted to suck my nose."

I had to let that sink in. "That's all?"

"Yeah. You think there's a poem in it?"

We became friends, Artha and I. She was Polish, she came from Sheboygan and moved to Milwaukee after her mother's second divorce. Her favorite teacher in high school made her read *The Reader's Digest* cover to cover every month, and she often thought that she could have "gone into journalism." In her last year in high school, when she was pregnant, she had joined the Book-of-the-Month Club and was still a member. Her child was born when she was 18 and immediately put up for adoption. She remembered that her room in the hospital was near the nursery.

I liked Artha. Talking to her was like opening up a door into an unlighted basement. Often after seeing her I would walk alone through the casinos on the Strip, staring at all those men who looked like sun-tanned liver marks, all cardigan sweaters and pinky rings, and I would wonder who were the nose suckers. If they sucked noses, I wondered what else was going on that I had never heard of, what baroque sexuality, wondered if there were special orifices drilled especially for the Vegas habitué, wondered what else was on tap.

The plastic namecard read, "Hi, I'm Lester Touhy, O.P., National Association of Industry Education Councils." I kept my eyes on Lester Touhy, the Passionist. He was wearing black alligator loafers with little tassels, black serge pants with flare pockets and no cuffs, a black dickey under a white dog collar and a double-knit, double-breasted, midnight-blue blazer with gold buttons in the shape of tiny anchors. Lester Touhy, the Passionist, seemed the perfect priest to send to a Vegas convention. Goggle glasses and razor-cut hair modishly styled over the ears, but still a dog collar, a Passionist at ease in the secular world of fund raising, given to Wild Turkey, Big Six and 10 the hard way. I tried to imagine confessing to Lester Touhy. "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned."

"That's cool."

All the while I was staring at Lester Touhy, O.P., Jackie Kasey was whispering in my ear. We were having breakfast at the coffee shop in the hotel and he was trying to fix me up with a date. His girl friend was a keno runner and her roommate shoveled sundaes at an ice-cream shop, 19 years old, name of Teddi. It was the 19 that was bothersome. And so I concentrated on Lester Touhy.

The thing is, Father, I'm uncomfortable with women born after VJ Day. Nothing can make the sexual imperative die quicker than trying to explain the difference between VE Day and VJ Day. I

Oh, Ralph, the blond says during the night, I never knew it could be so good

want them to remember the Battle of the Bulge and Colin Kelly and that Lucky Strike green went to war.

What I am trying to say, Father, is that I find it nearly impossible to be with it. I smoke a lot of dope and like the Rolling Stones and wear faded blue jeans and Levi jackets, but the jeans are faded in the washing machine with Clorox and Downy fabric softener. How do I explain to a 19-year-old that I like to walk through cemeteries and compose suicide notes and listen to quiet-voiced women talk about ovarian cysts? Or that I like to sing the Gregorian chant at the top of my lungs when driving on the freeways, *Credo in unum Deum*, not so much out of belief but because I like the melody, it does a lot more for me than "Light My Fire."

Lester Touhy, O.P., was talking about his golf handicap. His sensors were not picking up my confession. It was useless to try to explain to Jackie Kasey why I was so hesitant. Jackie, she never hear dof Commando Kelly, no, he's different from Colin Kelly, it's just hard to explain why it's important to me. And so in the end I agreed to take out Teddi.

I called my wife in Los Angeles. She said that she was lonely and depressed. The septic tank had overflowed. There was a crash pad next door and one of the couples had taken to boffing on the grass in clear view of our daughter's bedroom window. The wind was blowing and there were fires at Point Dume. The maid had quit, the fire insurance had been canceled and the engine in the Corvette had seized on the Ventura Freeway. "What's new with you?" she said.

"Jackie's got me a date with a 19-year-old tonight. She's supposed to ball me."

"It's research," she said. "It's a type, the girl who's always available to ball the comic's friend. You're missing the story if you don't meet her."

"But I don't *want* to ball her."

There was a long silence at the other end of the telephone. "Well, that can be part of the story, too," she said.

There seemed nothing more to say. I was the one who was supposed to be detached.

I went home for a weekend and right away I wished I had stayed in Vegas. First there was the construction. We were adding a room onto the house and what had started as a two-month job was now stretching into its sixth month and the construction account was $4,000 overdrawn. The first night home I fired the contractor. "Jesus, man, I understand," he said. He was an out-of-work actor and he and his crew sniffed a lot of cocaine and when he left he unexpectedly gave me a soul brother handshake, grabbing my thumb while I was left with an unimportant part of his little finger. That night my wife and I agreed to sell the house and to get a divorce. In the morning it occurred to me that the house was unsellable. There was a half-finished bedroom and partially laid tile on the living room floor, and until the new French doors were put in, only a sheet of clear Pliofilm separated us from the Pacific Ocean. The Pliofilm blew in the wind. I rehired the contractor. "Jesus, man, I understand," the contractor said. One of his crew lit a joint and began to scar a concrete block with a jackhammer. The noise from the jackhammer made my daughter cry and my wife said she would take her to Sacramento that morning and I said I would go back to Vegas the next day.

I've got a case, you might like it, Buster Mano said.

What kind of case? I was tired of cases and tired of the network of deceptions that seemed to characterize my stay in Vegas, but there was no imperative to go home. Yet.

This broad called me long distance from Savannah, Georgia, Buster Mano said. Her husband, Ralph Neary, was flying into Vegas that day on a Sands junket. The last of the big spenders, she had called him. Mr. Big Deal. Ralph Neary's wife suspected that Ralph Neary was going to be met there. She did not want to name names, but she bet she knew who that hussy was. She was nothing but a legal secretary from Atlanta. Mrs. Ralph Neary just wanted to check up. She just wanted to know what Ralph Neary was doing all the time he was supposed to be gambling. Buster Mano asked what Ralph Neary looked like. A physical description, so to speak. He's got hair on his back, Ralph Neary's wife said. And he's got a hernia. That's a good description, Buster Mano said, that's going to be a real help.

After that it was easy. The first thing was to find out what Ralph Neary looked like. He called the Sands. Ralph Neary, please.

"Hello."

"This is room service, sir, checking your breakfast order for tomorrow morning, 8:30 sharp, right? Six V-8 juice, six breakfast steaks, scrambled eggs on the side, toast, jams, jellies and hot coffee, right?"

"Wrong."

"This is not the party in 1411?"

"No."

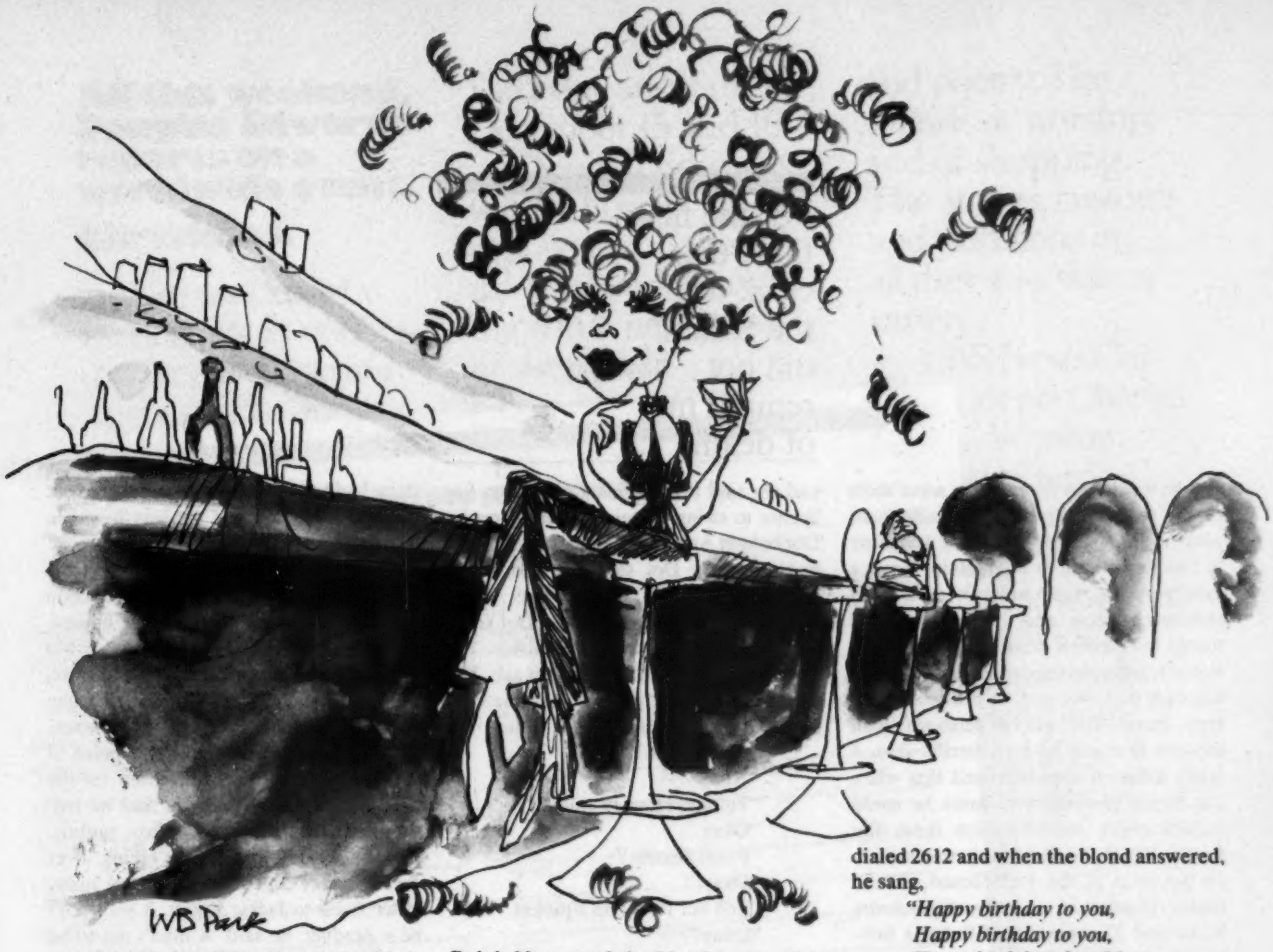
"I beg your pardon then, sir. To what party am I speaking?"

"2612."

"Would you care to leave a breakfast order, then, sir?"

A guy's in Vegas on a junket, so you figure he's not going to spend a lot of time in 2612, right? That is, until the legal secretary from Atlanta shows up. Up to the corridor outside 2612 and within 15 minutes Ralph Neary walks out the door. He had a black hairpiece and wore goggle glasses like he was a Flying Fortress pilot in World War II. Five-feet-nine and 202 pounds, hard as nails and proud of it, Buster Mano knew the type. Catches all the big events, the Derby, Superbowl, Indianapolis Five. They all had hair on their backs.

The chick showed up that night. She looked like Frances Langford, right



out of the big-band era, a lot of blond hair piled on top of her head, big wedgies, 35 years old on a good day. She looked like she had spent a lifetime meeting guys in Vegas or Miami Beach or Louisville for the Derby. There were lines around the eyes and there weren't going to be many more post times at Churchill Downs. Buster Mano liked her on sight and didn't really want to bug her room. That was something he had discovered about himself. No matter how nice the broad was, it was a turn-off for him to tune in on her balling someone. It was just one of those things.

Putting the bug in was a cinch. Room 2614 was empty, so he went to the desk and said listen, last time I was in I stayed in 2614, it's my lucky room, I made over $1,100 in that room, I wonder if it's free because I really feel lucky and I got the bankroll to prove it. Twenty minutes later Buster Mano had the room right next door to Ralph Neary and the blond, and the manager sent him up a fresh pineapple with his card and then later on a bottle of White Label with ice and setups. The word about the bankroll apparently traveled fast. The bug fit right into a wall socket and the only tricky part was to get Ralph Neary out of 2612 long enough to plug it in. So he just waited around until Ralph Neary and the blond went out to dinner and when they did he called the housekeeper and asked her to clean up 2612, the towels were dirty and the room needed to be tidied up, there was a five in it for her if she got it done fast. Then Buster Mano pops in from next door and says, listen, I'm in 2614, my wife's got ptomaine, it was something she ate in your coffee shop downstairs and there's no toilet paper, we need a couple of rolls of TP really bad, double-ply, if you got it, could you run down to the utility room, the toilet's a mess, we don't want to sue the Sands, you know, for serving a tainted hamburger. And the maid leaves 2612 empty for a couple of minutes and Buster fits the bug into the socket right next to the bed.

Oh, Ralph, the blond says during the night, I never knew it could be so good.

And finally: Ralph, baby, we going to go to the Cotton Bowl this year?

Buster Mano said, Don't bet on it, baby.

In the morning Ralph Neary went down to play a little blackjack before breakfast. He liked the action, *mano a mano*, just him and the dealer this early in the day. Buster Mano waited until he got downstairs and then called 2612. He still did not have the blond's name. So he dialed 2612 and when the blond answered, he sang,

"Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday, dear Myrna,
Happy birthday to you."

And then Buster Mano said, "And that's signed, 'Ed and Paula and all the gang at the office.' "

"Oh, that's so funny," the blond said.

"We'll send you a copy," Buster Mano said.

"But I'm not Myrna."

"You're not Myrna Kissel, Room 2612, Sands Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada."

"It's room 2612, but I'm not Myrna Kissel."

She's not going to bite, Buster Mano thought. "Who are you, then?"

"Roberta Boykin."

"Listen, Roberta, I'm really sorry, I'll ring the operator. And the happiest of birthdays when you have one."

He had the tape and the name and all he needed now was the picture. The hotels did not allow cameras in the casinos and you just didn't go up to Ralph Neary and Roberta Boykin at the swimming pool and say, Listen Ralph, your old lady back in Savannah would like a little candid of you and Roberta, you know, to use in the divorce. So he called the public relations man at the Sands and said he was from *Sunset* magazine and *Sunset* was going to do a "Holiday in Las Vegas" special issue

For the first time, the clock on the Sahara did not remind me of death

and he would just love to take some shots of the swimming pool and shuffleboard areas to show people that there was more to Las Vegas than just gambling, it was a family resort, too, with Olympic-sized swimming pools and shuffleboard and tennis instructions from the top professional teachers in the game, and gambling was only part, one part, of the good-time-type thing. The public relations man thought that was really a terrific idea, a really different approach, and that when the *Sunset* photographer came he could expect every consideration from the Sands. Which Buster Mano was shown. He got shots of the shuffleboard and the tennis instruction and the high-diving board and 22 exposures of Roberta Boykin greasing Ralph Neary's chest, lighting his cigar, kissing his cheek, tracing his appendicitis scar, all clear as a bell from a Nikon with a 600 mm lens set up on a tripod on the lanai side of the Olympic-sized swimming pool. Terrific stuff. So terrific that Buster Mano sent the rest of it to *Sunset* and to *U.S. Camera*. Just in case they had a "What An Amateur Can Do With a Nikon" section. You can never tell, Buster Mano said.

Jackie finished his engagement at the hotel and then he got a movie. It was typecasting, he said. He was going to play a Vegas comic. A small part, two lines. "Who's the chick?" was the first line, and "Honey, how are you?" was the second, but it was a shot, a new career, and he was going to make the most of it, he saw his shot and he was going to take it.

I saw Artha occasionally, and Buster, and I told them both that I would arrange a dinner so that they could meet, but I never got around to it. Mainly I just watched a lot of TV. And then one day I got a call from Artha. Her mother was in town and she asked me to dinner. It would be easier, she said, you can answer the phone, you know what I mean? Her mother's name was Dot and Dot was 47. Dot was going through the menopause and she said that the menopause was her license to swing, if you get what I mean. Dot bought Artha a Polaroid camera and a bear rug and Dot said she and Artha looked like sisters, maybe they could swing together. I asked Artha if Dot knew what she did and Artha said, listen, I'm free, white and 21, she better not ask. The telephone rang six times during the evening and the calls were all the same.

"Artha there?"

"No."

"Tell her Howard called."

"Okay."

"From Seattle."

"Okay."

"Tell her I'm in on a junket."

"Okay."

"Ready to howl."

"Okay."

"She'll remember me."

"Sure, Howard."

Dot never asked who called. When I left Artha's apartment that night I remember that the clock on the Sahara gave the time as 1:14 and the temperature was 98. When I got to my apartment the time was 1:33 and the temperature still 98. For the first time the clock on the Sahara did not remind me of death. I recall turning off the air conditioner and opening the windows and sleeping 14 hours bathed in sweat, as if after fever.

It has been two years now since I last was in Vegas and the things I remember about it have nothing to do with why I went, and less with why I left. I remember Jackie, of course, and Buster, Buster who, the last two Christmases, has sent me a calendar featuring the nude dancers of the Lido de Paris line over the logo "Buster Mano & Associates, Private Investigations." And then a few months ago I ran into Jackie on Sunset Boulevard. He had been cut out of the picture, he said, he was really terrific in his part, the director said so and the director said he wanted to work with him again he was such a terrific actor, a lead next time, but the picture was long and something had to go, sometimes you had to cut the best stuff, that was the way it was in movies.

We were a little uncomfortable with each other. The tenuous connection we had established in Vegas was broken. In that prison of yesterdays we could maintain the illusion that we were close, but with that Vegas tension gone I began to wonder if he was even a good character.

From a strictly personal point of view, it probably all worked out for the best, Jackie Kasey said. He said he had dropped the Brother JayJay routine. Brother JayJay had been taking over Jackie Kasey and there were too many other facets to Jackie Kasey. A man can't be a product, he said. A man's got to be true to himself. Twenty years he had been knocking his brains out in this business trying to be funny. Every night. That's not the answer. The answer is to be a person and try to find out who you are and what you are. Isn't that the answer?

I allowed that it seemed to be.

I am less sure than Jackie Kasey of what I have. I can only say that it was a bad season and then it was over. I had arrived in Vegas an emotional paraplegic, obsessed by death, and there I found a kind of peace. There in that Genet vision of hell my own version seemed tolerable; there, among the Snopeses of the free-enterprise system, life did not seem so bad. I would like to believe that I had a certain empathy for those whose lives I vandalized and I have changed their names here. People like Buster and Artha and Jackie allowed me in that troubled time to shuck off commitment to those close to me, to avoid all psychic responsibility while trying to work things out. What you have read is a myelogram of six months of my life. I can offer no guarantee that everything you read actually happened, only that insofar as it was perceived by my fractured sensors it was true. Then the pieces were back together, and in the fall I went home.●

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The town that's choking to death

By Roger Rapoport

Against a backdrop of Riverside smog: Barbara Zafonte, above, and her two sons, Matthew, 3, and Steven, 5; and citrus farmer Claude Pond Jr., below.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BILL EPPRIDGE/STILLLIFE

In Riverside, California, the air is so bad that kids can't play outdoors, the sun is rarely seen and they're beginning to grow oranges in oxygen tents

Although the air-pollution bureau's telephone number has been busy all morning, Barbara Zafonte can see what is coming. At noon, with an eye toward the darkening sky, she removes her half-dry laundry from the line, calls her two boys indoors and closes the apartment windows. During the afternoon she continues calling until finally, on the 22nd try, she reaches a recorded announcement: "The Air Pollution Control District advises that a smog alert has been called in Riverside County at 2:35 p.m. when the oxidant level reached .27 parts per million. At 3 p.m. it reached .30 parts per million. The temperature was 90 degrees and the alert remains in effect."

Barbara puts down the phone, turns up the air conditioner and looks out a window toward nearby Sugarloaf Mountain; it has disappeared. Hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen have coalesced into an ominous whiskey-brown cloud that makes it difficult to see more than 10 blocks. At nearby March Air Force Base, jet pilots execute instrument approaches through the smog. Motorists flick on headlights to guide themselves along the Riverside Freeway. Across the street, neighbors are leaving the community swimming pool coughing and wheezing. The sun is missing.

Three years ago Barbara had come to Riverside, Cal., with her husband Leo and their first child, to start a new life. But today, 150 smog alerts later, she feels like a warden. Nearly every day from May to November this slim, 31-year-old woman runs her family's life on the basis of ozone levels, paroling her children outdoors only when the air is safe to breathe.

Like Riverside's 151,000 other residents, Barbara has learned that smog is not merely a phenomenon, but a way of life. Once known for its oranges and grapefruits, this former resort haven is now the smog capital of America. Conditions that bring about an occasional air pollution alert in New York or Washington are commonplace in Riverside. Ozone levels here frequently exceed those of Los Angeles, 60 miles to the east. The ozone count surpasses the California health department standards roughly one day out of two. During the heavy May-October smog season, residents must breathe unhealthy air nearly every day. Alerts come as often as twice daily.

On this particular fall day, Barbara feels lucky; the alert lasts only until 3:50 p.m. "Sometimes they can go until 8 p.m.," she says, as neighboring women begin letting their children out to play. Her boys, Steven, 5, and Matthew, 3, clamor for a trip to the swimming pool. But Barbara is conscientious. She calls the Air Pollution Control District at 4:30 p.m. and finds the ozone count has still not dropped below the health-warning level of .20 parts per million. The boys will have to color, listen to records and watch cartoons a while longer.

At 5 p.m. her husband Leo returns by car from his job at the local University of California campus. He prefers walking the mile and a half to work each day, but Barbara made him take the car this morning. "Whenever it looks like an alert day, I make him drive. It's just too dangerous for him to walk and breathe that poison. What a vicious circle. To protect himself from the polluted air, he has to drive a car that helps produce more smog." Leo, a chemist, enters the apartment quickly because the nauseatingly sweet ozone gushes in through the front door. He used to enjoy jogging after work, but gave that up because it was just too much of a strain to breathe. This evening Barbara fixes a light supper of tuna fish sandwiches and salad.

"Every time I leave Riverside, I notice that whatever feels wrong with me goes away"

"Before we moved to Riverside I liked to cook big meals and bake. But I just feel too listless to do that on days like this. Besides, no one seems hungry when the smog is bad." After dinner Barbara shows her husband that another one of the rubber slats supporting a foam chair cushion will have to be replaced. The ozone in the house has caused the rubber to crumble. "If it does this to the furniture," she says, "imagine what it's doing to the kids' lungs."

By 7 p.m. the ozone smell has dissipated and Barbara opens up the apartment. The boys charge outside to race their bikes up and down the block. Their mother watches them gloomily. "One of the great things about being a California child is that you can run free most of the year. But my kids are gradually learning to be indoor children. When I grew up in New York, I spent more time outside during the winter than these boys spend outdoors during the summer."

Shortly after 8 p.m. it is time for the boys to come in and go to bed. After they are asleep, Barbara speaks once again with her husband about the prospect of moving out of town. Like 75 percent of the Riverside populace, they are thinking about escaping to a new home where skies are blue. Both of them know that reputable community physicians have begun encouraging the estimated 22,000 residents with heart or lung disease to think about leaving. While there's still time. One study shows that smog has contributed to the death of at least 450 Riverside patients. They've seen this kind of news scare off some of the town's most ardent pollution fighters. Since 1966 four of the six presidents of Clean Air Now (CAN), the local anti-smog organization, have fled Riverside after finishing their terms. CAN's current president, Joe Doty, plans, just as soon as his year is up, to leave, too.

Some residents of America's ozone capital can't get away fast enough. For example, this evening Dr. George Simnett, an astrophysicist at the University of California's Riverside campus (UCR), is busy closing up his house. Tomorrow the 33-year-old professor, his wife Jennie and their three young children will turn their backs on Riverside for the last time. The lanky scientist has spent the day tying up business matters. Now, at 9:30 p.m., he is out in the backyard replacing a broken fence post. His exhausted wife is sorting laundry. Lawn mowing and hedge trimming during the smoggy afternoon have worn her out.

Four years ago this British professor accepted a 50-50 teaching-research assignment with UCR's physics department. During a break in his fence work, Simnett recalls, "I was hired as the junior man in a 21-member physics department with a clear understanding that I would eventually be entitled to a full-time appointment in an expanded university."

Unfortunately, ambitious UCR expansion plans that would have guaranteed Simnett's future were shelved when severe air pollution began scaring away new students. During a campus inspection tour, he was depressed to hear one couple sneer, "We couldn't possibly let our daughter live in this environment." Simnett also made the surprising discovery that UCR Chancellor Ivan Hinderaker shunned his own campus quarters in favor of commuting two hours a day to a home in the healthier atmosphere of Corona Del Mar.

After finishing with the fence post, Simnett returns to the den of his four-bedroom ranch home, nearly tripping over assorted Dr. Seuss books, dolls, sweaters, jackets and pants littering the floor. "Things really began looking dim in 1972," he says, "which is why the administration spent $27,500 to hire high-powered recruiter Ken Suid. He developed all sorts of wild promotional gimmicks like a deck of oversized playing cards with campus facts on the backside. About $10,000 was spent on sending 12,000 decks to high-school students. Humanities curriculum was plugged on the flip side of the ace of hearts, and the math department got a boost on the reverse side of the king of diamonds. Unfortunately Suid quit in June, 1973, citing a series of serious smog-induced respiratory, ear and nose infections."

By then, UCR's enrollment had dropped from 6,000 to roughly 5,400. Simnett was frightened by rumors of impending layoffs because he knew his job would be the first to go in the physics department. A quick search landed him a position back in England at the University of Birmingham. Shortly after tying down his new job he learned that UCR would phase out 30 positions, with termination notices coming in July, 1974, effective a year later.

"If enrollment keeps dropping, more positions could be cut and whole departments could collapse," Simnett says as he walks to the door and ushers in a late-evening caller. His real estate agent has arrived with a representation contract that must be renewed. "I had this place sold for $30,000 a month ago and the buyer suddenly welshed four days ago," Simnett says. "The local realty market is very soft. Houses move but prices are generally below those of comparable areas with less smog. Some houses that sold for $18,000 in 1960 are now going for $21,000. That doesn't even keep pace with inflation."

After wishing the real estate agent good night and good luck, Simnett walks outside with his wife for some night air. He has little nostalgia for the past four years: "Every time I leave Riverside, I notice that whatever feels wrong with me goes away. My eyes stop watering, my nose stops running, and my throat isn't sore. I also seem to be more cheerful. It's very depressing to live in a community surrounded by mountains you can't see. The sun rises, but you never know where it is. And on an otherwise clear night like this, the lingering smog makes it hard to see even Polaris or the Big Dipper."

At dawn, while the Simnetts rise to attend to last-minute details, over four million cars and hundreds of industrial

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Personally Drank Any Alcoholic Beverage In Past Month	69.2	54.9	45.3	44.5
Smokes Cigarettes—Any Kind	40.4	32.7	26.4	28.2
Personally Used Any Shampoo In Past Month	70.0	58.1	51.8	49.9
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facilities in neighboring Los Angeles and Orange Counties begin exhaling hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen. These prime pollutants are wafted by ocean breezes into the Riverside basin where they are trapped by the San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mountains. Here, sunlight produces a photochemical reaction that converts these two pollutants into ozone. Because Riverside is poorly ventilated and sits at the downwind end of the Los Angeles basin, its ozone level has become the worst in America. Fresh sea breezes from once relatively open Orange County that used to cleanse the area no longer help. Due to extensive urban development Orange County now funnels more smog into Riverside.

As the ozone level rises with the sun, another resident, Claude Pond Jr., is out working the irrigation gates on his 50-acre orange grove. Pond, a husky, soft-spoken native, has worked local citrus groves for nearly all of his 50 years. His grandfather started orchards back in 1880, just 10 years after Riverside was ambitiously developed and subdivided into a prosperous citrus colony.

Looking out at the brown murk, Claude opens an irrigation gate and says, "Until about 15 years ago this was almost a perfect place to live. Crops were good, you had a beautiful mountain view, the air was clean—why this place was a great resort. Before it went bankrupt a few years ago, the local Mission Inn was a favorite California spot for vacations or celebrations. That's where President Nixon married Pat back in 1940. I guess it's been about 15 years since the smog started getting noticeable. By the early '60s things started getting bad, and the last five years things have been awful. Why, the mayor has even asked Governor Reagan to declare Riverside a smog disaster area. Of course Reagan wouldn't do it." Reagan indicated that a California attorney general's ruling precluded him from declaring a general state of emergency in the Riverside area.

Mailmen rush through their rounds to get back to the post office before it becomes too hard to breathe

After finishing the irrigation work, Pond begins moving down a row of orange trees, spraying a weed-control chemical with a hand wand: "No one knows exactly what this smog is doing to the people, but I sure can show you what it's doing to agriculture. This city used to be a garden. Spinach, squash, romaine lettuce and summer cabbage have been nearly eliminated. Corn is short and wine grapes are down. The experts at the university tell me that my orange crop is probably down somewhere between 25 and 50 percent because of the smog. With extra fertilizer, weed control and pest control, it's possible to get the yield back up. But that costs so much it's not worth it. There's no sense in growing oranges in Riverside anymore. Groves in this area today sell for $3,500 to $4,000—less than half of what they sold for 10 years ago. When smog ruins five to seven million dollars worth of Riverside County crops each year, people aren't rushing in to take over your groves."

Pond walks over to a row of stunted orange trees fronting on a busy highway: "Of course, you know, we make some of our own trouble right here in Riverside with car pollution. The yield on this row is 30 to 40 percent less than rows 100 feet off the highway. When they put a stop sign up at one corner of our grove, all the trees at the intersection grew virtually no oranges. When they took the sign down, the yield went back up."

The citrus farmer drives back over to his ranch home, where his wife Pauline and two mean German shepherds greet him. He takes a look at the ailing sycamore tree in the front yard. "We've already lost our redwood," says Pauline, "and now this tree is in trouble. It used to just shower the yard with leaves so badly that we could hardly rake them up. Now the leaves just don't seem to be growing."

As the ozone stench becomes inescapable, the Ponds move into their air-conditioned living room. Claude says, "We've been feeling pretty sorry for ourselves these days. Our friends have been giving up their orchards and moving away. Fewer people come for a visit anymore. It's getting lonely around here. We'd both hoped our son would stay and take over the groves after he finished school. But that would have been crazy. There's no future for agriculture in this city. Sure, some of the scientists are helping nearby farmers grow their oranges in oxygen tents. But that's no answer. Our boy is smart. He's moved away to work in an air-conditioned grocery store for five dollars an hour. You've got to be stupid to be a farmer in Riverside."

As Pond returns to the field to continue his weed control work, the pace of life in Riverside is quickening. Mailmen are rushing through their rounds to get back to the air-conditioned post office before it becomes too hard to breathe. Door-to-door salesmen are moving double time. Barbara Zafonte and other women are speeding to finish their morning shopping so they can get home to give their children a little playing-time outdoors. Unfortunately, when Barbara reaches her apartment at 11 a.m., the smog is thick enough to taste. Her boys must go straight inside.

At this very moment, George Simnett and his wife are piling personal belongings into their Mustang for a cross-country drive, which will be followed by a transatlantic flight to England. By 11:30 a.m. all five Simnetts are in the car and George heads east on highway 60. In a few minutes they reach the top of Box Springs grade. On rare clear days, residents come here to enjoy a 60-mile panorama stretching all the way to Santa Monica. Today, George glances back at Riverside and can just barely make out the tops of palm trees originally planted to attract new settlers. On the radio a disc jockey interrupts with an important announcement: "The Air Pollution Control District has just advised that a smog alert has been called in Riverside County at 11:40 a.m. when the oxidant level reached .27 parts per million. . . ."●

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MOVIES

A discouraging word or two about the American Film Theatre

By Frank Rich

In case the word hasn't reached you yet, you should know that independent film producer Ely Landau is doing the best he can to bring us, the unwashed public masses, some culture this year. Landau's vehicle for spreading the enlightenment is a project known as the American Film Theatre (also billed as this country's first "National Theatre-on-Film"), a series of eight movies wrought from "famous" plays that is being shown at over 500 theaters around the country on a four-performance, subscription-only basis. These plays-into-movies have been cast with some of the foremost actors and actresses of both this land and bonnie England—all working at less than their normal fees, for such are the sacrifices artists must make in the service of culture. (Or perhaps one should say Culture.)

Since the AFT is dressed to the nines in prestige and good intentions, the mere mention of a discouraging word or two may well be viewed by some as an act of intellectual sacrilege only slightly less unsavory than book burning. Landau has fostered this kind of atmosphere by his aggressive fall ad campaign, which left the impression that to join the AFT (at a price "scarcely more than ordinary movies") was to join an elitist group whose members would rather sit at home than be caught going to those routine films that are the lot of the madding crowd.

The AFT's own official history, published in the playbill its audiences receive, elucidates further: "Landau found from his own experience as an independent producer of a few exceptional films . . . that the standard practices of the American film establishment do not favor the marketing of more discriminating and thoughtful types of films if, indeed, the tendency of the establishment is to produce such films at all."

Well, what establishment is he talking about? There is no longer a Hollywood monolith controlling American film production. And what does he mean by "thoughtful" and "discriminating"? Judging from Landau's own track record—TV's justly famous "Play of the Week" series and such movies as *The Pawnbroker*, *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *The Madwoman of Chaillot* and *King: A Filmed Record . . . Montgomery to Memphis*—films can only fit this definition by being either laced with '30s-vintage social comment or adapted from the work of one of those famous playwrights we all know and love. Apparently there is little room in Landau's terms for fine but unpedigreed personal films such as Mazursky's *Blume In Love* or Lucas' *American Graffiti*, to take some recent examples. Maybe too many people like these movies to qualify them as "discriminating" filmmaking.

Of course there are plenty of good films that do not get wide American distribution but should—a particularly grievous case in point would be nearly all the work of India's great director, Satyajit Ray. Yet Landau isn't taking the gutsy step of marketing *them* nationwide. Presumably, like the "establishment" he so deplores, he has branded these films commercial losers and doesn't want to take the risk. So he instead produces eight new movies that are mainly adaptations of safe, smash Broadway shows, equips them with *Grand Hotel*-esque casts, pretends they are not commercial so that he can appeal to middlebrow snob values, and hopes to poormouth the enterprise all the way to the bank.

The fact that the movies derive from plays is hardly a guarantee of high cinematic quality—the proof must surface on the screen. This year alone two directors have tried and failed to make a movie out of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, while Robert Altman (in *The Long Goodbye*) has gone and made something that looks very much like a masterpiece out of a Raymond Chandler detective novel. The "national theatre" aspect of the AFT is a sophisticated hustle designed to serve two ingenious purposes. The first of these is to gain a few p.r. brownie points for the project by calling attention to the alleged weightiness of its cultural baggage; the second is to appeal to an audience's vanity and so convince it to support some bad movies in order to see an indeterminate minority of good ones. If you move beyond all this hocus-pocus, it becomes clear that Landau's chief accomplishment has been to get the public to cover his bets. (He's covered nearly all contingencies, too. The AFT ad carefully states, "If you don't see [the films], you will have missed the chance to see them, perhaps for years to come." If the films fail to break even the first time around, that "perhaps" may be Landau's escape clause.) It's as if Paramount made anyone who wanted to see *Godfather II* buy tickets to *Scalawag* and *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* as well as a condition for admission. You've got to give Landau some credit, I guess, for succeeding where others have feared even to tread.

The AFT's batting record to date is one-for-three, which is respectable enough—had the films been in regular theatrical release, where audiences could pick and choose among them. Of the two flops, director John Frankenheimer's version of **The Iceman Cometh,** Eugene O'Neill's drama about the "pipe dreams" of the denizens of Harry Hope's flophouse bar, is the more severe disappointment, almost a casebook study in how not to film a one-set play. The action is shot at such close range that the drama breaks into bits and pieces; the film doesn't flow, it drips. I felt I was watching O'Neill's play through a peephole and kept straining to see beyond the edges. Frankenheimer (whose best films are *The Manchurian Candidate* and *Seconds*) never makes some incisive acting by Robert Ryan, Fredric March, Moses Gunn, Jeff Bridges, Tom Pedi, Sorrell Booke and (amazingly enough) Bradford Dillman pay off as a credible chain of human relationships. Nor does he get any help from Lee Marvin's hollow Hickey, a performance that sucks the juice out of O'Neill's craftily constructed last-act illusion-smashing revelations.

The failure of **A Delicate Balance** is far more academic. Edward Albee's drama about a surburban couple under siege by the wife's drunken sister, a rebellious much-married daughter and two best friends seeking refuge from an amorphous "terror," never worked on the stage in the first place. Celluloid doesn't solve the problem, despite a film cast that includes Katharine Hepburn, Paul Scofield, Lee Remick, Joseph Cotten and Kate Reid.

Way back when, in his one-acters and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, Albee was a dramatist, but *A Delicate Balance* postdates *Tiny Alice*, the work that heralded his metamorphosis into a lecturer. This play is full of speechifying, word games and heavy-handed obscurity. The characters do not come across as either real people or legitimate esthetic abstractions of them, but are merely the playwright's mouthpieces and props, pointing to the emptiness of their lives in pseudo-literary stage language that ranges in tone from the arch to the coy. The point of all the banter and the crying and the drinking and the carrying on has to do with Albee's anger at bourgeois values and manners and his hate-worship of strong, castrating women. In 1973 these ruminations have lost both their timeliness and shock value; *A Delicate Balance* is almost quaint.

While Scofield may well be the greatest stage actor of our time, he never comes across as powerfully in movies as he does in the theater (as anyone who saw both the stage and film versions of the Peter Brook *King Lear* can attest). His work in this film does not challenge this thesis, but he does provide the movie's most lively sequence—a wailing soliloquy delivered to best-friend Cotten in Act III. There is at least some pleasure to be had in leaning back and listening to that unique voice, bleating and choked, as it makes the word "ask" sound like it has five syllables.

Hepburn, who more than any other actress has the knack of making pap seem elegant, is nonetheless defeated by her role as an Albee creature-woman and spends much of the film jerking her head this way and that, as though she were undergoing electric-shock therapy. I was more bored than nervous myself: and director Tony Richardson (whose film of John Osborne's *The Entertainer* is one of the best play-inspired movies ever) didn't arouse me much with his latent fascination for the zoom lens and his apparent determination to include a household lamp in almost every single shot.

Maybe Peter Hall, a director who took another late Albee play (*All Over*, which had been a quick Broadway flop) and turned it into a viable stage commodity in London last year, might have done something with *A Delicate Balance*. But I'm glad he didn't try; his film adaptation of his original Royal Shakespeare Company production of Harold Pinter's **The Homecoming** (with most of that great 1965 cast intact, including Vivien Merchant, the playwright's wife and unbeatable leading lady) proves to be a flawless rendition of a work that has the unmistakable dimensions of an enduring classic.

Pinter's brutal comedy is a study in tension as it exists in an all-male north London household consisting of an aged retired butcher, his 63-year-old chauffeur-brother, and two unmarried sons (a would-be boxer and a pimp). When the third, prodigal son—a Doctor of Philosophy—returns from America with his wife, a violent struggle for absolute power erupts over the bleak, blank landscape that is the family's domain. The dialogue is as precise and idiomatic as Albee's is vague and self-conscious, and this psychic shorthand is what gives Pinter's words a power that transcends the special dramatic situation of the play. While *The Homecoming* satisfies as both comedy and horror-show even at its most literal level, it is also a metaphorical exploration of the family and male-female relationships—carried out in a dim primeval no-man's-land where love and hate are terrifyingly indistinguishable.

Like most of Pinter's work, this play is built around silence—a silence that, like the words that break it up, has its own rhythm, depth, poetry and cruelty. This is a tricky quality to capture, especially in a movie, but Hall does so with bravura editing, timing and visual composition. The sinister patriarch Max (Paul Rogers) might well be talking about the play itself when, while reminiscing in the first act, he says emphatically, "You never heard such silence." Believe me, you never have—and it's too bad that without booking passage on Landau's gilded cultural lifeboat, "perhaps" you never will. ●

Michael Jayston, Ian Holm, Cyril Cusack and Paul Rogers share a Pinter silence in Peter Hall's flawless Homecoming.

BOOKS

A view that the narrowing of differences between the sexes will crush both male and female

By Richard Kluger

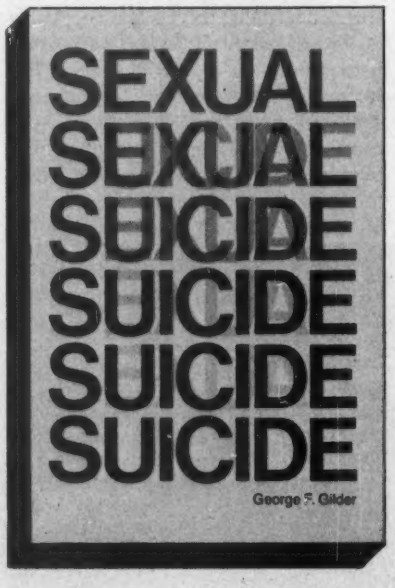
Sexual Suicide by George F. Gilder, Quadrangle, 308 pp., $7.95.

One comes away from this alarming tract with the conviction that the only way to stop the feminist blitzkrieg from reducing male chauvinism to a state of lisping remorse is to open a *pissoir* in fetching day-glo on every street corner in America.

The continence of male bladders is not the issue. It's *machismo* that makes George Gilder's world go 'round, and his profound concern, argued with dogged force, is that women's liberationists, the gay community, open-marriage advocates and allied kinky emancipators are setting us on a disaster course when they insist that humanity's salvation will come only through narrowing the differences between the sexes. Narrow them enough, retorts Gilder, and not only will you end the exploitive scourge of male piggery—you'll jolly well shrivel the male psyche beyond repair. The result: sexual suicide—and, presumably, rampant bitchery.

It is tempting to dismiss this book as an insult to both sexes, for Gilder's men are all from the wham-bam-thank-you-ma'am school of compulsive sexuality (they can't help it, he says; hormones drive them wild), and his women are all at home upholstering the nest, suckling babes and generally wrapping Dagwood around their adhesive little fingers lest he run off and wrestle a bear. But *Sexual Suicide* is important precisely because it is so vigorous and unambiguous a counterattack on the counterculture. A prominent figure in the Ripon Society school of Republican closet intellectuals, Gilder ardently defends such once-sanctified institutions as the family, marital fidelity and breast-feeding, while flaying the likes of co-education, day-care centers, zero population growth and legalized marijuana as manifestations of a single-minded castration campaign by feminists and allied androgynous marauders. All that's missing here is a foreword by a Spanish inquisitor. Yet Gilder should not be ignored, for he reminds us that the squares among us may be less articulate, sinuous, rhythmic and hairy than the swingers, but that they are not necessarily less numerous or determined.

"In discussing the erotic aspects of our lives," writes Gilder, "we must concern ourselves chiefly with women. Males are the sexual outsiders and inferiors." Pregnancy, child-birth, nurturing, the menstrual cycle, all constantly confirm women in their sexual identity. Men have no such luck. Between climaxes, they are in a state of perpetual anxiety about their manhood, which from time immemorial has made them a testy bunch of brutes, "abjectly dependent on external performance and achievement." To keep them in line, Woman has prescribed to them the



role of protector of the hearth and provider of material sustenance. Men, in short, are all Id, Women are the Superego in drag, and when the twain meet in the endless battle of the sexes, the ladies should take a dive or we're going to end up with a lot of fellows with limp wrists, among other parts, and a chaotic society.

Society means the home, says Gilder, and the home means the family, and the family means babies. And any act of sex that is not procreative, either intentionally or potentially, is mere sensuous massage.

The giveaway of this distressingly simplistic analysis of human sexuality is the shock it registers over the impact of birth control: "A man quite simply cannot now father a baby unless his wife is fully and deliberately agreeable. . . . The male penis [is there another kind?] is no longer a decisive organ in itself . . . a man cannot validate his procreative powers, his role in the chain of nature, without the active, deliberate, and now revocable cooperation of a woman." Quite so. Or to put it in words the author would not: men can no longer rape their way to happiness. Some people, even some men, think this is progress. Not Mr. Gilder.

Sexual Suicide is quite good at defining and explaining some of our more glaring aberrations, but it invariably goes haywire in prescribing what to do about them. In the stimulating chapter titled "The Sexual Sources of Demagoguery," for example, we are told that many gun-loving men cling to their weapons "and persist in their hunts as totems of masculinity, as rites and symbols of their continuing role as protector and provider in the family." Therefore, gun controls "may exacerbate the syndrome of male insecurity, violence and frustration that they are designed to restrict." Imagine what he'd say about not stunting the mini-psyche of every tyke who dumps his oatmeal on the Persian rug. No, not all of us are so laggard in our evolution from the treetops that we believe manhood begins and ends between our legs. The gunners who aren't willing to turn in their gats and sign the social contract with the rest of us ought to be dispatched to the hills, and good luck to them.

In viewing Women's Lib, moreover, as an encore from *Lysistrata, Sexual Suicide* takes the bait hook, line and vibrator. Instead of hitting out like Bobby Riggs, Gilder pretends he is enthroning the ladies like so many queen bees. Chivalrous as the effort may seem, it comes to the same derogatory thing. For some women actually have goals in life beyond the rewards of Momism, and they are asking only for the chance to fulfill them. ●

THEATER

David Storey's new play: depth, not scope, is his goal

By Tom Prideaux

Along with keeping whiskey in a cupboard, farmer Slattery buries emergency bottles by gate posts, under trees, or in a potato patch. Wisely, his wife hides still another bottle in the house for the occasional use of herself and her three grown daughters. The Slatterys, who inhabit David Storey's new London hit, *The Farm*, know almost too well how to live together.

Over the past few years Storey has built his fame with three unusual plays: *Home*, *The Changing Room*, and, belatedly having a fine production now in New York, *The Contractor*. This latest play, *The Farm*, is an orthodox domestic drama acted with cup-and-saucer realism. No tea, however. Whiskey and coffee.

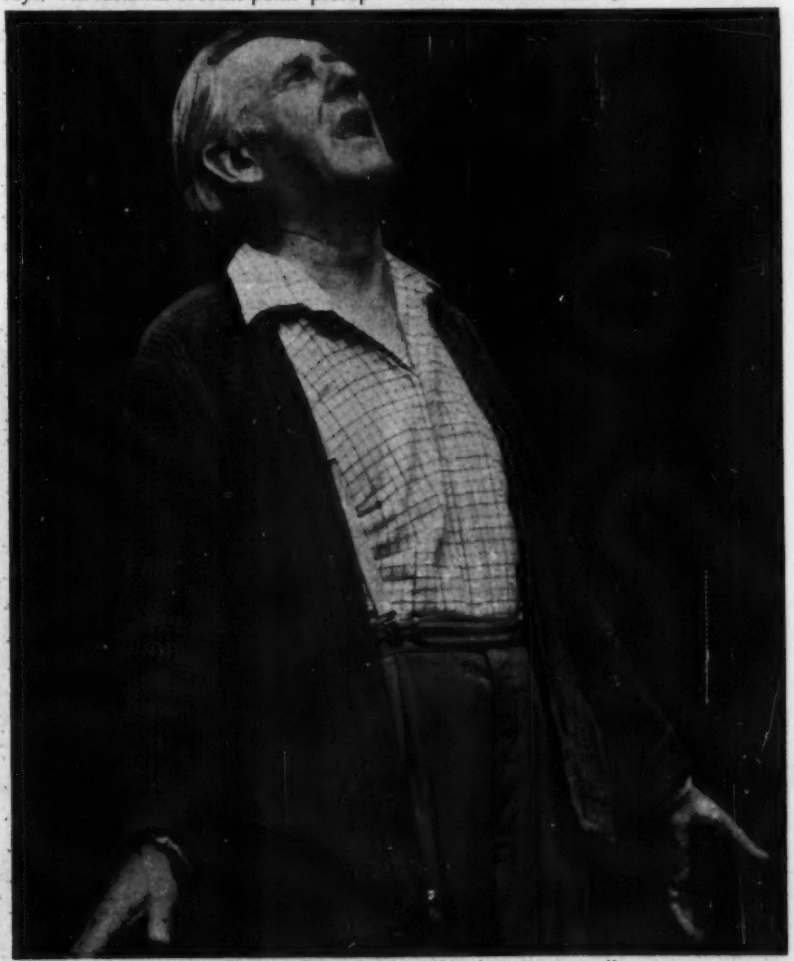
In many plays today the author's mind, flaunting its fancies and symbolic stunts, is the star of the show, stealing the bravos from his hapless characters. But Storey is so deft at counterfeiting reality that he appears to have expunged all traces of himself from *The Farm*, leaving the tenants in full command. As usual, Lindsay Anderson, who has directed most of Storey's works, marshals a flawless cast who appears quite unaware of a chap named David Storey.

Set in Yorkshire, where Storey himself grew up, the Slattery farm is a halfway house between the moors and the industrial valley. Majestic old Slattery, immersed in booze and self-pity, calls himself a brontosaurus, a relic of past times, versed in cows and bullocks, geese and hens, while his four womenfolk drive into town on various brainy pursuits. Two daughters are school teachers, the other is a would-be revolutionary, his cheerful wife goes to night classes in sociology and has a harmless flirtation with her professor. They complain that moor-bound Slattery treats them "like some sort of primeval cattle," but they still cling to the nourishing presence of the farm.

The family hangs and swings like a Calder mobile, its members linked together but free to tilt and spin—until one night the balance is rudely shaken. The young shaker is the Slatterys' poetic vagabond son, drifting home to declare that he means to wed a divorced actress bearing 40-plus years and two children. Old Slattery reacts with a brontosaurus howl and gets drunk. The ladies respond in gentler tones and prepare to inspect the bride-to-be at a family supper. By the play's end the mobile is back in balance.

Storey's scrupulous realism is woven into the texture of his dialogue. It comes in spurts and loose ends. Noting a lack of decisiveness in today's world, Mrs. Slattery muses, "Everybody seems so uncertain. The ones who do seem confident you'd dismiss as stupid, I expect." And of her sister's dream of social reform, Wendy says, "All idealism at some point presupposes a certain degree of paranoia."

But *The Farm*, for all its rewards, is not a major play, just as Storey, at 42, is hardly yet a major dramatist. Rather, he is a special case, a winner in a different race. In his dramas—the earlier ones were about day laborers, rugby players and asylum inmates—he zeroes in on small areas. Depth, not scope, is his goal; his undemonstrative Yorkshire nature fences him in. But there is no denying his compassion and integrity. David Storey may have a distaste for the peaks of greatness. I don't know. Right now he is sidling up Olympus in his own sweet time. ●



Bernard Lee as farmer Slattery: he calls himself "a brontosaurus."

TELEVISION

Quiz shows today: it matters not who wins or loses, but how the game is played

By Stuart Werbin

". . . [The networks] are damned nervous and scared and we should continue to take a very tough line, both face to face and in other ways." Those words were contained in a White House memo which former Presidential advisor Charles Colson wrote in September of 1970. The "other ways"—including a demand for intervention by the IRS, the FCC and the anti-trust division of the Justice Department—are spelled out in part by the series of memos which Lowell Weicker, Republican Senator and Watergate daytime TV personality, released as a rebuttal against citizen Nixon's media attack to his nation. Weicker's memo collection does not claim to be complete and therefore our minds can open to consider other fronts on which the Commander-in-Chief might launch a tactical incursion across TV's DMZ. Could our Vice President of the fabulous '50s have forgotten the days when incidents of fraud and corruption disclosed by the Senate's investigation of the great quiz-show scandal blackened the flinching CBS eye and ruffled the scared NBC peacock's feathers?

What skeletons could an old pumpkin patch haunter find in the closets behind Monte Hall's *Let's Make A Deal* doors today? If subpenaed, would Chuck Barris' executive files reveal that some alleged Newlyweds have actually been married for over a year or, worse yet, have really been living out of wedlock?

No! There can be no great quiz show scandals in a nation without great quiz shows. Once they were the networks' brightest child. Both a factory for instant American heroes, admired for the bulges in their brains, and an arena where any citizen willing to nourish a particular expertise (be it the battles of Napoleon or the bouts of Joe Louis) could hope to someday claim a sizable piece of the promised land. They held a powerful grip on a fascinated public which was unaware that deception ruled the force that brought families together around the glow of their 12-inch Zeniths.

But when the news broke that Charles Van Doren had been wetting their dreams with dishonest sweat, the videot nation turned into an electronic lynch mob, demanding that the scoundrels meet their justice. Thick in bad applesauce which threatened to spoil the credibility of the entire corporate barrel, the networks took the only action that could restore the public confidence; genocide.

The quiz broadcast was created by Depression-days radio. There were three original prototypes. *The $64 Question*, basic American dream, quick cash for quick answers, some lose, some quit, some go all the way. *Strike it Rich* and *Queen For A Day* enhanced the suspense by expanding the human element. Contestants only qualified for those shows by proving in a hopefully heartwarming manner that they *needed* to win. *Truth or Consequences* was the rapscallion sibling that mocked the ritual of answers for questions, celebrated slapstick's laugh provoking tension and rewarded good sportsmanship.

The transition to television was easy for *Queen, Truth* and *Strike,* but *Question* found that small dreams fade in the face of opened eyes. *Question* didn't have the zeroes to stay in the game with the forgers of the atomic age, drunk on no-down-payment suburban wine. Heavy coals had to be thrown into the pipe dream, but greed became the fuel to run fantasy's fire. After the scandals, only those programs such as *Truth or Consequences, Concentration, People are Funny* and *The Price is Right* survived. They did so by claiming to never have really been "quiz shows" at all. "Game Shows" is what they claimed to have always been, arguing that they were much more closely aligned with the spotless "panel shows" like *What's My Line* and *I've Got a Secret*, where nobody ever won more than $80 and the only people who had to do any brain work were the celebrity panelists, citizens above suspicion.

The necessity to disassociate was most graphically demonstrated by the fates of two programs which were flour-

Monte Hall, who has no skeletons behind the closet doors of Let's Make a Deal.

ishing in the daytime dream market at the time of the crackdown. *Concentration* and *Tic Tac Dough* ran back to back during NBC's early lunch hour. Each was a variation of a simple child's game adrenalized by cash and merchandise. Although no substantial testimony was brought against *Tic*, it instantly perished because it was the product of the Jack Barry/Dan Enwright team that got caught tilting their isolation booths on *Twenty-One*. *Concentration*, the offspring of Mark *What's My* Goodson and Bill *Line* Todman, survived, and still turns her creaky squares to reveal Waring Blenders today.

Currently (in New York) there are 18 game shows broadcast over the three major channels during the 9-5 daytime shift. Most of these are network productions, but a few like *Truth or Consequences*, *To Tell The Truth* and *What's My Line* are versions of former network shows which produce new packages for spot syndication. Only two games, *Let's Make a Deal* and *The Hollywood Squares*, have a nighttime version which is broadcast regularly over the stations that carry their daily versions. But there is not a single game competing against a regular network offering, on a network affiliate.

In the decade and a half since the crackdown, no game show has come close to gaining a hold on the nation's imagination in any way comparable to the mania that filled restaurants and subways with emotion-packed dialogues on the forthcoming battles between Charles Van Doren and Elfrida Von Nardroff, the mental predecessors of Riggs and King. True there are people who watch *Jeopardy* religiously (they made themselves known when NBC tried substituting the more complex Watergate Games), but I would bet $100 on the daily double that few if any of them could remember the full name of a single champion from last July, while one doesn't need a photographic memory to remember that Teddy Nadler was the army clerk who exploited his photographic memory to the tune of 64 Gs.

When the age of the great quiz show was in flower, the persona of the individual contestants were the brightest buds. The 13-year-old stock market whiz who won $100,000 on *The Big Surprise*. The priest and the rabbi who answered the questions about each other's calling on *The $64,000 Challenge*. And the female psychologist who rode her knowledge about the manly business of pugilism all the way on *The $64,000 Question* and then parlayed her expertise on everybody else's business into her own television program: *Ask Dr. Joyce Brothers*.

The formats were designed to milk the viewer's dedication to the instant stars and overnight sensations on display in see-through, sound-proof booths. Three or four contestants would split the isolation air every week. Each would endure a single sweaty ordeal, to answer all the parts of the question. The high point of tension was reached when a favorite player seemed momentarily stumped on part two and asked to go on to parts three and four before returning to the moment of truth back at part two. If they succeeded, they would be asked if they cared to go home with four or eight or 16 or 32 thousand dollars—or if they dared come back next week and answer one question worth SIXTY FOUR THOUSAND DOLLARS! There is no way that the drama built up over the course of weeks can be matched by Monte Hall giving a couple dressed as toadstools 10 seconds to decide whether to trade in their trip to Acapulco and matching sets of American Tourister luggage for a chance at his-and-her Pontiacs.

Charles Van Doren on 21, *"wetting dreams with dishonest sweat."*

But it is precisely because the charisma of the contestants and the longevity of their tenures were the strongest elements of the heyday quiz shows that they have been so painstakingly avoided by the surviving game shows. The stars of *The Hollywood Squares* are the teevee personali-*tease* who sit surrounded by neon, waiting to supply punch lines to straight-man Peter Marshall's lead-ins. Their longevity is not threatened by the accuracy of their answers; it is stated at the end of the program that they are briefed on the content of their questions. In fact, due to the magic of advance taping, their longevity is not even threatened by death, as witnessed by Wally Cox, whose image still occupied the top left-hand square on the game board three months after his death. Contestants, however, come and go on conveyor belts.

This is the safeguard against the seeds of corruption, which also extinguishes any chance for the media's mind games to again rival professional sports for the fancy and fantasies of the American family.

The only program of our time where the personalities of the players challenged the personalities of the panel—and in which a contestant's time in the spotlight was a point of tense speculation—was the live daytime version of the Watergate Game Show. But videots around the nation clamored for and won the full reinstatement of *Who, What and Where, Gambit* and *Jeopardy*. People don't like to be fooled by the same trick a second time. And if they think they smell a fix, they'll switch from Bob Haldeman to Charlie Weaver faster than you can say the secret word and win $100. ●

The Who, who gave us *Tommy*, now deliver their masterpiece

By Janet Maslin

The Who's *Tommy* was all the rage in 1969. *Tommy*, after all, was what *Newsweek* recently labeled a "milestone," the first complete rock opus to actually tell a story. But while *Tommy*, the first official "rock opera," was a real innovator, the Who's new album, *Quadrophenia*, is not. The new album is superficially just another two-record set about another troubled boy with another two-syllable first name, distinguished by its overall brilliance rather than any major firsts in format. Yet *Quadrophenia* is—thus far, at least—the group's masterpiece.

It is also a work the Who have been leading up to, in one way or another, for the better part of a decade. *Quadrophenia*'s disturbed protagonist is a young English mod of the mid-'60s who, try as he might, can't make himself as handsome or well-dressed or self-assured as his cronies. He just doesn't know how to look right—and neither did the Who back in 1965, when they posed for the cover of their first American album, *The Who Sings My Generation*. They all wore Beatle haircuts and the trendiest of short lapels, but John Entwhistle looked genuinely dismayed, Pete Townshend was hopelessly gangly and Roger Daltry's coiffure and jacket both suited him so badly as to convey a definite Frankenstein cast. And Keith Moon had effected a wide-eyed, cute-like-McCartney gaze that was clearly faked.

Although the Who would soon become best known for their trick of smashing up their equipment onstage (although they generally took the cut-rate route, with Townshend ramming cheapo guitars into hollow speaker cabinets), they were even then on the verge of their first "rock opera," a longish track called "A Quick One While He's Away" that appeared on their second American album, *Happy Jack*. The plot was somewhat crude, being exactly what the title suggested ("Her man's been gone for nearly a year/He was due home yesterday, but he ain't here"), but the song included an interesting series of submelodies—and, like everything else the Who does, it conveyed a unique mixture of passion and control.

The Who performing in the early '60s: they all wore Beatle haircuts.

While *Tommy* was ambitious and managed to sustain a startling level of intensity, its structure was so doggedly linear as to be less musical than cinematic (*Tommy* will finally be filmed this winter, by Ken Russell—Townshend is to re-orchestrate the score, Daltry plays the boy, Moon plays wicked Uncle Ernie). And the linearity narrowed *Tommy*'s effectiveness, as did the specialized subject matter (deaf, dumb and blind boy plays pinball, then evolves into totalitarian messiah). But where *Tommy* was linear, *Quadrophenia* is a circle; through it, the Who pass back in time to their mod days, just as the central figure remembers *his* mod miseries in an album-length flashback. And *Quadrophenia* also takes a circular approach to melody, going way beyond *Tommy*'s direct, strictly narrative structure. There is only one complete song here; the rest of the cuts either provide new introductions to a series of floating refrains, or end on the same note of sudden detachment, so that each cut is distinct but shares a melodic core with all the others. Fittingly enough, the one song to stand outside that pattern is "The Punk Meets The Godfather," a symbolic confrontation between the mod audience and its rock heroes. The "Godfather" revels in his power but confesses his transparency, stuttering a refrain of "My Generation" at the end of each of his verses.

The Godfather figure behind the album itself is of course Pete Townshend, who conceived and wrote all of it, and who is credited with playing "Remainder," i.e. guitar plus everything not credited to anyone else. Townshend has also created a little taped auto-interview explaining the album, doubtless hoping to avoid a lot of transatlantic nuisance calls while he packed for the band's American tour, which is currently under way. Cautioning his listeners to "all get comfy," Townshend describes the album as "very nostal-

The Who today: "We've given up the struggle and we just float along with it."

gic, y'understand, but very forward looking at the same time." He explains that it's a story about a boy "whose name—don't laugh!—it's not Billy, it's *Jimmy*. He suffers from a curious form of mental at-t-t-tphertrophophry," stutters Townshend, who means "atrophy." "It's known as quadrophenia, rather than schizophrenia; his motivations are four-way, and that's so I could get all the group in. 'Cause if he'd only been schizophrenic I'd only get two of the band in and there'd be arguments and fighting backstage, all kinds of nonsense."

Jimmy begins the album stranded at sea, alone on a rock. He is "disenchanted with everything," and most of the album details the disenchantment rather than probing Jimmy's madness. Speed makes him crazy, gin makes him mean. He can't get an even tan, can't make his jeans as tight as everyone else's, can't hold onto his girl. He longs for just the right jacket, just the right motor scooter, but he also suspects that may not be enough. He conveys all this by narrating a series of episodes that may be fantasy or memory, we're never quite sure which. (*Quadrophenia* beautifully avoids the standard rock opera pitfall of trying to be too cinematic, and so there is no literal description; the only tangible elements here are bits of melody, not bits of information.) Throughout it all, Jimmy tries to explain his problem, but he's meant to be agonizingly inarticulate—so Daltry's vocals pick up where the lyrics leave off, conveying all the pain and frustration of someone whose energies are blunted at every turn, for reasons he just can't fathom. Jimmy's confusion, presented without analysis, is left open-ended enough to suggest the confusion of his whole generation.

"The Rock" is the inspired final synthesis of four interrelated themes (one for each band member), and enough to drive the listener quadrophenic with trying to hear the sub-strains together. In it, Jimmy creates his own symbolic "rock" out of his own inner resources—and after that he simply vanishes. "I don't really know whether I imagine that the boy walks away from the rock, or whether he jumps in the sea, or whether he drowns or whether he wins or loses or whatever. I haven't really made up my mind about what happens," says Townshend. But the album's final cut—Pete's theme, "Love, Reign O'er Me"—suggests that Jimmy may simply give his spirit over to the water, much as Townshend has given himself over to the teachings of Meher Baba.

"What led *me* to get spiritually insecure—desperate, if you like—was everything going too well," Townshend says on the tape. "I was running out of ambition . . . I got to the grand old age of 25, and I'd done everything I wanted to do. And I thought, 'What else is there to do, what am I here for, why have I been born if everything comes so easy? I just look at something, and all of a sudden it's mine.' So I figured I'd go for the absolute biggest target I could ever go for, which was presumably to find God, and to find myself."

Townshend's spiritual evolution is as important to *Quadrophenia*'s conception as his musicianship is to the album's success. He speaks of the album as a "gain in command," something that "usually only happens to a rock group once in its lifetime," like the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper*. But now, at the end of his first decade of stardom, Townshend's enthusiasm is understandably dampened by certain occupational hazards. "We've given up the struggle and we just float along with it. I mean, air hostesses still say, 'Which one's Tommy?' We all laugh today at that appalling remark in the same way we do when somebody comes up and says 'Who? Who? Who, which, what?' We all laugh and go 'Yeah, good one. Never heard *that* joke before.'" ●

FINAL TRIBUTE

To the Watergate Committee: Thanks. You did fine

Senator Sam Ervin opening the Watergate hearings last May.

By Bob Greene

The hearings have ended for the rest of the year. The glamor died a long time ago; when the television coverage stopped, the flash and crackle somehow went away, and the day-to-day business in the Senate Caucus Room didn't get talked about so much any more. But somehow, at the end of this year of terrible troubles, it seems worth the time to take a moment now, for a quick, quiet word of appreciation. A small expression of gratitude. Because during these melancholy months when everything else seemed to be turning ugly and sinister, when every American possibility seemed to be a tawdry one, the seven Senators managed to show us that we can, indeed, still do something right in this country.

At first, we were reluctant to verbalize the feeling we got when we saw the Senators doing their work, questioning the witnesses and throwing the filth the nation had been living with out into the open air; the feeling we got when, in 1973, we saw these elected representatives talking in basic terms of right and wrong. That is something we had forgotten could happen in Washington, and the word that came immediately to mind to describe what was going on inside so many of us was "patriotism." But it had been so long since we dared use such a word, and so mostly we left it unsaid.

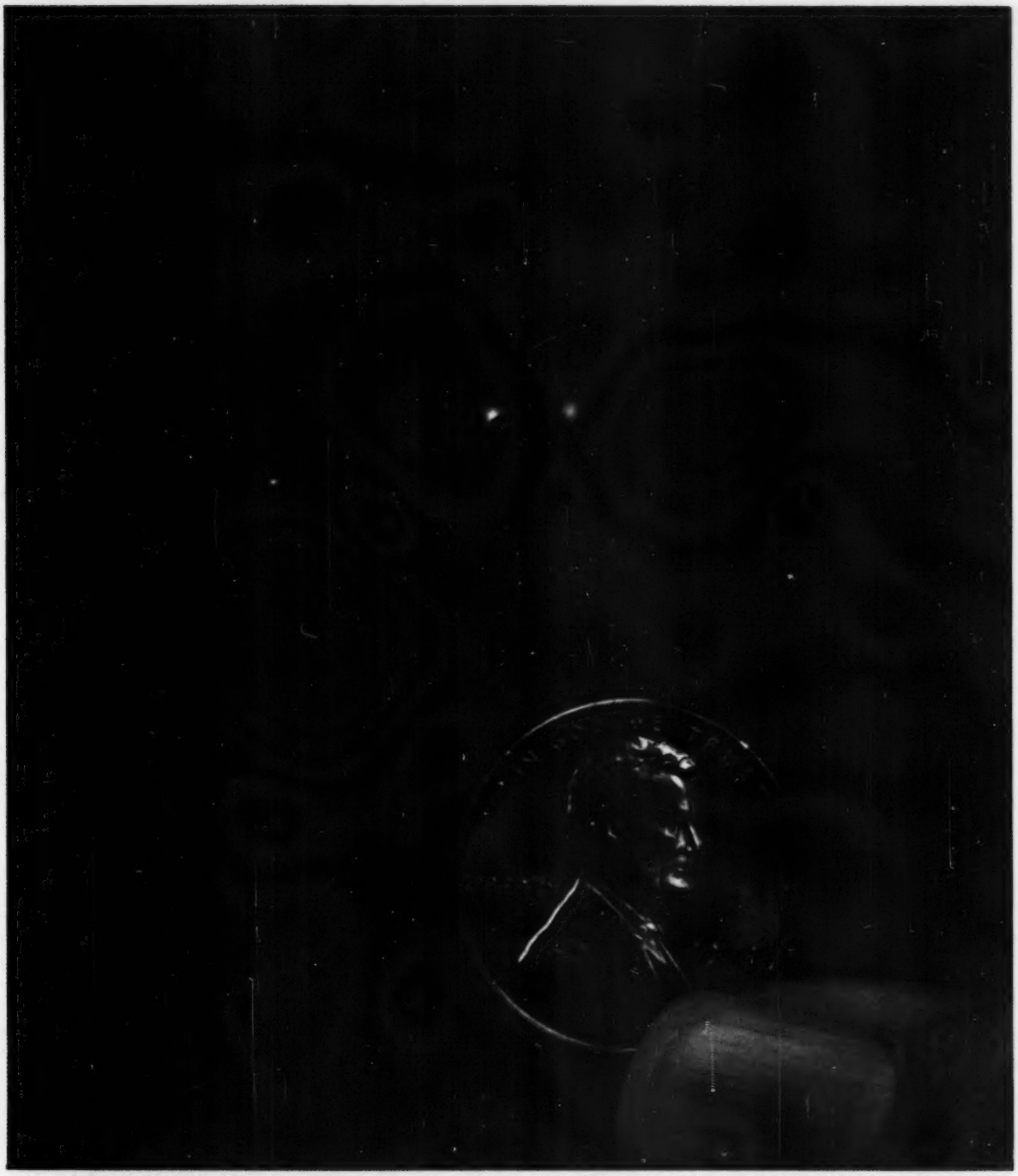
Wasn't it a lovely thing to watch, though, on those long summer days. Wasn't it something to hear Herman Talmadge, the back roads of Georgia in his voice, explaining to the men who used to be the most powerful bosses in the country, telling them about the basic tenets of decency that prohibit one man from breaking into another man's house. Wasn't it lovely, day after day, to observe Sam Ervin pleading the case for simple human instincts of goodness and just-heartedness—and in doing so, actually becoming the moral leader of the nation, the acting President of the United Sates during a time when so many of us really had no President.

Bob McCandless was thinking aloud about it the other night. He was one of John Dean's attorneys during Dean's days in front of the Senators, and now McCandless looks back on the months of hearings as "a catharsis available to all the people who sensed the problems the country was facing, and who had no other way to work it out. All over America, people had a chance to watch the hearings and sort this thing out one day at a time. And if the hearings were kind of an amateur production at times . . . well, that's how democracy can be. We all followed the hearings and relieved ourselves of a terrible burden; we said, by God, let's find out what happened. And watching those hearings, we knew that somehow or other, we *were* going to find out."

Oh, of course, they were less than perfect, the seven Senators. Some were showoffs, and some were dull, and some took the easy way out on too many occasions. There were staff fights and petty jealousies and wrong decisions. And yes, perhaps it is naive to regard the Watergate Committee with such fondness, with such warm feeling and pride. But maybe, at this point in time, a little naiveté is in order. Maybe, after all the years of cynicism and hardness, we can afford to be a little bit open, a little bit trusting and believing. Because, regardless of all the faults, the seven Senators did for us the one thing that we needed so desperately: they opened the doors, they showed us that no matter how dank and fetid our government can become, there always remains the possibility of making things better again.

In the years ahead of us, the work of the committee will be put in historical perspective. The deeds will then be measured dryly and dispassionately. But now, as the hearings come to a close, it is time for a more immediate response to the men who showed us that we can at least try to do right. To the seven Senators: Thanks. You did fine. ●

Greene, a Chicago columnist, has written for NEW TIMES *on Judge Hoffman, Howard Cosell and rock group Blue Ash.*



Collector's Item

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Where ideas get response.

Share America's Whiskey.

When you head out for a Christmas party in the country, sometimes you find the roads aren't plowed.

Sometimes you find there aren't any roads.

But no matter. A little snow won't hold you back. Not when the lodge is just around the bend. Where the fire is crackling, and a turkey's turning on the spit.

It's a time when old friends make new friends, and everyone shares the joy of the season.

It's a time when all over America, people share the friendly taste of Seagram's 7 Crown. Not only as a gift, but in the holiday drinks they serve.

Seagram's 7 is America's favorite whiskey. Especially for America's favorite time of year.

Give Seagram's 7 Crown. It's America's favorite.

SEAGRAM DISTILLERS CO., N.Y.C. AMERICAN WHISKEY—A BLEND. 86 PROOF.

GIFT-PACKAGED AT NO EXTRA COST.